

THE WIDE WORLD

THE
Magazine for Everybody

MAY, 1920

20•

Cents.



A SPLENDID
NUMBER

As sure as you
are a foot high

you will like this
Camel Turkish and
Domestic blend!

Camel CIGARETTES



Camels are sold every where in scientifically sealed packages of 20 cigarettes for 20 cents; or ten packages (200 cigarettes) in a glassine-paper-covered carton. We strongly recommend this carton for the home or office supply or when you travel.

R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co.
Winston-Salem, N. C.

YOU will prefer Camels smooth, delightful blend of choice Turkish and choice Domestic tobaccos *to either kind smoked straight!* It gives you an entirely new idea of cigarette enjoyment.

Camels never tire your taste no matter how liberally you smoke. They are always appetizing—and satisfying, because they have a desirable, mellow body.

Camels leave no unpleasant cigarette aftertaste nor unpleasant cigarette odor. In fact, every angle you get on Camels is so different from any other cigarette that you will be won as you were never won before!

That's why we say frankly—*compare Camels with any cigarette in the world at any price!* We know the answer!

Learn Wireless By Mail—In Ten Weeks

Calls Coming in Steadily, for National Radio Institute Graduates from All Parts of the Country. Four Concerns Guarantee to Take All Operators We Can Furnish.

Commercial Radio is now an industrial necessity and many attractive positions are now open in the Commercial Land Radio Service, Merchant Marine, Railroads, Radio Supply Factories, Lake and Ocean Steamship Lines, Telegraph Companies and Aerial Mail Service. We are now receiving requests for more National Radio Institute Graduates than we can furnish.

Salaries Up to \$15,000 a Year

Our graduates start work as Senior Operators at \$125 a month with all living expenses paid. Advancement is rapid to high positions with bigger pay, as follows:—Radio Aids \$6 to \$15 a day;—Aerial Mail Service \$1,500 to \$2,400 a year and 10% bonus;—Radio Inspectors \$1,200 to \$3,500 a year;—Radio Engineers \$2,500 to \$15,000 a year. Our Graduates are guaranteed positions upon securing their official license after taking our course.

Get Your Instructions From the Nation's Capital

(Our Course is Endorsed by the United States Government Officials)

The National Radio Institute established in 1914, was the first in America to successfully teach wireless Telegraphy by Mail. It is headed by authorities who have been closely allied with government training of students. The work is under the direction of J. E. Smith, E. E. formerly director of the Radio Department, Howard University and E. R. Haas, formerly of the Radio Division of Yale University assisted by a competent corps of trained instructors and lecturers.

We now have hundreds of home students throughout the world, and maintain two completely equipped schools in Washington where those who wish may secure personal class instruction. A special summer class is now forming. Our location in the Nation's Capital places us in position to give our students the best instructions obtainable and to be of the utmost help in assisting them to secure good paying positions.

Travel if You Want To

If you want to travel and see the world, go to foreign countries and increase your knowledge of world affairs, wireless offers you the chance of a life time. However, you are not obliged to travel but may secure a permanent position near home at one of the many land radio offices, railroads, telegraph or steamship companies if preferred.

Pay as You Learn

Our plans of payment places a wireless education within the reach of anyone who desires to learn. A small payment down on our convenient payment plan, and small following payments, enables you to earn the cost of your tuition while actually learning to be a wireless operator.

Instruments to Every Student

In addition to five text books—one hand book—46 Special Lessons and 18 Personal Examinations we send you, while taking our course a complete Automatic Natrometer Transmitting and receiving set for sending and receiving messages. These fine instruments are sent only to National Radio Institute Students. Upon enrollment every student in the National Radio Institute is also presented with a handsome blue and gold pin signifying his official membership in the N. R. I. Relay League, with a rapidly growing membership throughout the world.

Wireless Telephony Course Given

In addition to our complete course in radio telegraphy, every student is given our complete course in modern radio telephony. This course comprises ten special lessons and ten personal examinations. These combined courses enable our students to fill positions requiring thorough knowledge of both radio telegraphy and modern radio telephony. This is the first Wireless School to teach wireless telephony by mail.

Send the following coupon today for our FREE book containing all particulars and special offer to students enrolling now.

**NATIONAL RADIO INSTITUTE, Dept. 213,
14th & U Sts., N.W., Washington, D. C.**

MAIL THIS COUPON TODAY

NATIONAL RADIO INSTITUTE,

Dept. 213, 14th & U Sts., N. W.,

Washington, D. C.

Send me, free of charge, your booklet, "Wireless, the Opportunity of Today," with full particulars regarding your famous 10 weeks Home Study Course and your Special Wireless Instrument offer.

Name.....

Address.....

City..... State.....



"THERE WAS A SHARP CRACK, AND SOMETHING WHIZZED PAST MY EAR."

(SEE PAGE 4.)

THE WIDE WORLD MAGAZINE

ADVENTURE ~ TRAVEL ~ SPORT

Vol. XLV.

MAY, 1920.

No. 265.

LUCKY PETE

By *Stuart Cumberland*

ILLUSTRATED BY
WARWICK REYNOLDS

A moving story from the Alaskan goldfields. "The incidents I personally relate," writes the Author, "I experienced myself, and what was told me I have chronicled in good faith."



HIS is not exactly a dog story; but the hero is a dog. I knew Pete, the dog, and Allan Macdonald, his master. We were all three at the 'Varsity together; for when Macdonald came up at Cambridge he brought Pete—then a mere pup he had bred at his place near Oban—with him.

When Macdonald left Cambridge for Canada he took Pete also, for the two were absolutely inseparable.

I have had an extensive acquaintance with dogs, and understand something of their psychology; but the bond between my college chum and his canine friend was something quite out of the common. They understood each other thoroughly, and it was intensely interesting to note how the dog sought to interpret every wish or thought of the master.

I heard from time to time from Macdonald whilst away, and in every letter mention was made of Pete. One letter came from Klondyke, where he had gone in the

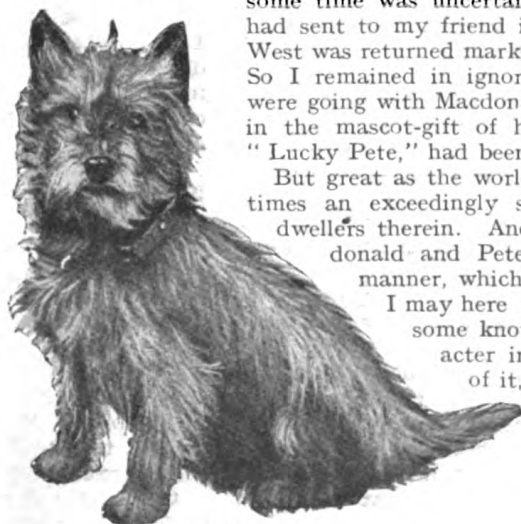
early days of the gold rush. Pete was there with him—"the only real friend and companion I have in this land of greed and desolation," wrote Macdonald. "He is not only my true pal but my mascot, and one day he will bring me a big streak of luck—dear old Lucky Pete."

This, it so happened, was the last letter I received from Macdonald. About that time I was suddenly called abroad, and my address for some time was uncertain. Later on a letter I had sent to my friend in the Canadian North-West was returned marked "Left; no address." So I remained in ignorance as to how things were going with Macdonald, or how far his faith in the mascot-gift of his devoted companion, "Lucky Pete," had been realized.

But great as the world is as a whole, it is at times an exceedingly small one with certain dwellers therein. And I was to hear of Macdonald and Pete in a most unexpected manner, which I will relate.

I may here mention that I also had some knowledge of another character in my story—the villain of it, Hell Fire Ned.

I had some years before met Hell Fire at a wayside posting-house in California on my way back to Frisco. He was then



"Pete."

running a mine and was well in funds. I had at the time just written a descriptive article on the destruction by volcanic eruption of the famed Pink Terraces near Auckland, N.Z. for the *San Francisco Chronicle*; and side by side with my article was a graphic account of a "gunning" episode that had taken place at a mine. The portrait of the "gun-man" headed the account. It was a striking portrait, and so true to life that on meeting him I at once recognized the man whom it sought to represent. My photograph, illustrating my article, must have been equally life-like, as he at once recognized me. Hell Fire Ned, with a dominating roughness, bade me a hearty welcome to his part of the country, and trusted I would leave with a good impression of it. To celebrate our meeting, having pinned a much-thumbed diminutive wine-card to the table with his knife, he asked me to name my drink. He had dashed against the wall a small bottle of local wine I had previously ordered with my crackers and cheese, as being "pig-wash" and not fit for a traveller's consumption.

I was to order of the best, he said; and I promptly ordered a bottle of champagne, at ten dollars the bottle.

When the landlord brought in the bottle, with two glasses, my host, who was suddenly called away, excused himself for a moment, but bade me "drink hearty" meanwhile, when he would on his return drink hearty with me.

The minutes ran on but he failed to come back. A friend of his whom I had seen drinking in the saloon outside when I entered the Rest, however, came in.

"Hell Fire's taken quite a fancy to you," he said; "and it ain't his custom to be gone on Britishers—know-nothing yaller-legs, as he sizes them."

"Very good of him," I remarked.

"There ain't much particular good about Ned and there ain't much particular bad either, 'cept when he's in drink; an' when he is he's Hell Fire with the lid off in one act. Do you play poker?" he went on.

"A bit," I replied.

"Well, he's for takin' you up to the mine as his guest for a few days, when you can have all the play you want."

I explained that I was tied for time, as I was hurrying back to 'Frisco to catch a boat to Vancouver Island, and that the pleasure of being his friend's guest was unfortunately quite out of the question.

"Waal, he's set his heart on it, so you can figure out what he'll say when he finds you are not game."

I explained that it was not a question of gameness, but solely one of urgency and prior arrangement.

"I thought perhaps you were figuring on that little incident up at the mine the other night. Hell Fire was right there, as we all told the sheriff. The man was a cheat and was drawing on Ned, but he got in first; and, arter all, he was only a Dago. You ain't in that class, and you and Ned will get on all right t'gether if you

don't cross him when he is a bit arg'menty. Then he lets his gun speak as quick as his tongue. And a mighty slick man is Hell Fire with his gun, when there isn't too much of a whisky-shake in his hand. But if you really can't come you can't, an' I believe it's honest Injin with you."

"It is," I affirmed.

"Then I should advise you to ship before he comes in. By this time, with what he's been puttin' down his throat with his chums outside, I reckon he won't be in the humour to take 'No' for an answer. Savvy?"

I "savvied," and hurried out to find my stage-driver. He was flicking some flies off his horses' heads.

"Ready?" I asked.

"Yes; and about time you was," he replied, with marked emphasis. "Hell Fire has just asked me if you had come out. He's for taking you up to the mine with that boozin' crew over there, an' a nice Sunday-school picnic you will have!"

"Not much! I'm going back to 'Frisco as fast as you can drive me to the landing-stage."

"Then jump up afore Hell Fire catches sight of you, or there may be a funeral in these parts to-morrow at which you won't be chief mourner. Ned ain't named Hell Fire for nothin' when he's balked."

I hurriedly took my seat by the driver, who promptly whipped up his horses.

Then I heard a shout, and, looking back, saw the Herculean form of my would-be host swaying in the sun. He had a whip flourishing in his left hand and something in the other; I could not quite make out what at the distance. I was not long in doubt. There was a sharp crack, and something whized past my left ear.

"Duck, you fool, duck!" shouted the driver, grasping me by the neck and forcing my head down. "He's too full to shoot straight, I reckon, an' it won't strike him to mount one of them bronchos and foller afore we're out of range."

Hell Fire, however, fired two more shots wide of the mark, and the hurried backward glance I gave when, seemingly, we were out of range, disclosed an apparently very angry man pumping out oaths with a volume equal to that of one of his mine-pumps when in full working order.

This is the last I saw of him, but the remembrance of our meeting and sudden separation remained with me through the years which elapsed till I again heard of him. And when I did so it was in association with Macdonald and Lucky Pete.

I had to visit British Columbia in connection with a big mining merger with which I was connected, and the business took me to Spokane, that City of the Falls built almost entirely out of the profits of mining, where the president of one of the mines coming within the proposed merger resided.

One night at the hotel, in one of the snug little rooms off the entrance to the bar, we had

John L. R.

been playing poker for fairly heavy stakes. It was, I will admit, against the law to play; but although we one and all knew it we played all the same. And we law-breakers were in good company, too. There were a couple of mining magnates, a senator, a judge, an ex-preacher, and a quick-rich "boodler" from Chicago.

When we broke up, one of the party, an old-time miner named Tom Best, hinted to the quick-rich man that, with so much money about him, he should be careful he was not held up on his way to the villa he occupied just out of the town. "I can take care of myself," was the pompous reply. "A hold-up man will find he has mistaken a red-hot chill for a ripe tomato if he takes *me* on!"

"I guess the hold-up men know their pigeons," was the tart rejoinder.

Putting his fat wad of bills in his inner pocket, the quick-rich man grunted good night and went on his way, leaving me standing on the side-walk talking with Best.

"He'll make no bigger fight of it than a rabbit if he gets held up," remarked my companion, with an air of contempt.

And he was right. A few minutes later we heard loud cries for help, followed by the speeding steps of a policeman. Then came a shot, and another. We went in their direction to see a burly policeman taking what cover he could behind a tree and aiming at a figure crouching behind the wall of an alley. The crouching form fired; then, seeing us coming on the scene, rose hurriedly and took to his heels.

"A better target than shot," remarked Best, jerking a finger in the direction of the policeman. "If the footpad wanted to have hit him he couldn't have missed him any more than goin' wide of a haystack at arm's length.

"If I'd had your gun I guess I'd 've plugged him first shot," he added to the bulky policeman.

"Waal, I haven't had the experience at shootin' that you have, Mr. Sure-Shot Best," was the reply.

We were now joined by the victim, who thought it safe at that moment to come out of hiding.

"So you got held up, arter all?" queried Best.

"There was a dozen of 'em, all with guns," snorted Mr. Quick Rich.

"And they got your wad whilst your hands were up?"

"What else could one do against such odds?"

"We only saw one, and he seemed in a precious hurry to git so soon as he was tackled," was the dry reply. "Waal, he got away, and with him went your nice fat wad."

"But it was you fellers' money, most of it. I got up, as you know, on the winning side."

"Yes, I was sure you were a pretty big winner by the way you wanted to get away long before we broke up. You got cold feet, I reckon, pretty early in the game."

Mr. Quick Rich snorted, and edged close to the policeman.

"Oh, yes," said the policeman, "I'll see you

a bit on the way. The danger, I reckon, is over."

"Have you any idea who the tough was?" asked Best.

"One of the Seattle gang, I reckon," replied the policeman. "They have rounded 'em up in Seattle and they have come on here for a change of scene. Seattle, I hear, is getting as bad as it was when Hell Fire Ned and his gang did the hold-up biz."

"His hold-up days are over," said Best. "He has gone to a place where there's no gettin' out of, no matter what political or money pull you may have. And I saw him sent there."

"And you knew Hell Fire Ned?" I said, when the policeman and his protection-seeking companion had gone their way.

"Yes, and I'll tell you the end of him."

Summarized, this is Tom Best's story, which brings in Allan Macdonald and Lucky Pete.

For a while Best had been Macdonald's "pard" in the Klondyke; but no great success had attended the partnership. They had become close friends, however, and in this friendship Pete was included. "Sure-Shot Tom" had a tender spot in his worn old heart for Macdonald's faithful companion.

"Pete was Sandy Scottie's dog, and he was one of them one-master animals that have no room in his mind nor heart for any other boss; but he took to me all the same, as he knowed that I was his master's chum and played the game straight with him from first to last. But all th' same he pretended he didn't care a row o' pins for me. He used to growl as if he was real angry when I put my face near his and ask him for a lick. Sandy said it was 'cos of my whiskers, so I had 'em shaved off. But it wasn't that, fur he growled jest the same. It was a way he had. He was very artful, was Pete. He was th' most knowin' crittur I ever saw, and could do anything 'cept talk—and he could talk too in his own way, though it wasn't exactly human talk. He would do anythin' Scottie told him to do—fetch an' carry, an' no end o' other things. He was fuller o' tricks than a circus dog, an' used to amuse th' boys for hours. But he'd take no orders from anybody but Scottie, though when we was camping near Gold Town, and I broke my leg, so that I couldn't walk, he'd go to the post and fetch my mail for me an' other little things he could carry as Miss Maisie would give him to bring me. He used to keep the flies off my face when they were gettin' too worritin'. I never saw a dog so fierce on flies as was Pete, and Klondyke and Cape Nome flies lick creation!"

Macdonald and Best had made tracks for Cape Nome when the first gold-rush came on, and had located claims round about what was given the name of Gold Town, which, however, was not a town, not even in the making. It was just a small mining camp with one general store, with which was combined the post-office, some eating-houses and saloons, the chief of which went by the name of the Boundary Hotel. Later a one-storey shack was run up, at which

banking business could be transacted. At the time of its foundation the pioneers had great hopes of Gold Town. It was to knock spots off Dawson City and eclipse Sitka. But the fond hopes failed to materialize. Some big finds were made at times, and hopes accordingly ran high; but in the end Gold Town went the way of many another mushroom mining town and to-day has no existence.

Shortly after their arrival at Gold Town Hell Fire Ned appeared on the scene. He was lucky from the first, and his old habit of painting the town red became a prominent feature. As I happened to know, Hell Fire Ned was an ugly customer when in drink. In one of his ugly moods he was offensive to Miss Maisie, the post-mistress, whom everyone in the camp respected. Macdonald was said to be sweet on her, but was thought to be waiting till he "struck it rich" before disclosing his intentions. That he was going to strike it rich one day he was certain, and he was very hopeful of the prospects of a claim he had named the "Lucky Pete." In this claim Tom Best had no interest, as he had taken over a promising location worked by Hell Fire Ned, who, after the incident in connection with Miss Maisie, the post-mistress, had left Gold Town for parts unknown, having first been knocked down by Macdonald. Before leaving, Hell Fire had given it out that he would shoot Macdonald at sight; and it was generally allowed that he would be as good as his word. But months had gone by since that threat had been made, and Macdonald had been working undisturbed on his claim, expecting every moment to find that which would enable him to put the question to Miss Maisie.

Then that moment came. What came of it I will set down practically in Tom Best's own words.

There were those in the camp who said Hell Fire was only talking through his hat; but those who knew him knew he was only waitin' his chance, and would turn up when least expected; and if he got in the first shot it'd be bad business for Scottie. I came very near puttin' lead into Hell Fire myself just before the Miss Maisie affair. He comes down to our shack and kicks at Pete—who was snappin' at the flies that were worritin' me—'cos he'd killed a black kitten of his'n, which, havin' stole his master's dinner, Pete was quite right in doin'.

Says I, "That dog's my chum, an' if you hurt him you've got to answer to me, his master not bein' here. I can't get up to get at ye, lyin' here with a broken leg, but I've got my gun by my side, an' as ye know I can shoot some, an' you bet I'll never shoot straighter. What! Kick my chum Pete, the camp's mascot, th' boys' pet! You git before there's trouble. You're askin' for it, and you're sure goin' the way to git it."

Waal, he just growled and went off, an' I patted old Pete's head. He gave me a lick an' a look that said he understood. From the

first Pete never cottoned to Hell Fire; an' Hell Fire didn't like Pete because his master was so fond of him an' because Miss Maisie made such a fuss of him.

But to come to the day when Hell Fire returned to Gold Town. The boys were in the hotel-bar, when all of a sudden in comes Scottie. "Boys," says he, "I've struck it rich at last. The 'Lucky Pete' will turn out a real thing, the biggest, I think, in the camp. Name your poison, boys, and drink to the health of the camp."

"An' not forgettin' the owner nor the crittur after which the claim is named," said I. We named our poison, and with glasses in our hands toasted the host.

"But where's Pete?" I asked. It didn't seem natural to see Scottie without his chum by his side.

"Oh, he's with Miss Maisie," he said, colouring as he spoke. "I dropped in there on my way home, and she is feeding him with cakes she has just made. Pete is a glutton for her cakes. Well, boys, here's how!"

He was just raisin' his glass to his lips when a shadow crossed the window. It was that of Hell Fire! Would he shoot at Scottie through the open window before he had a chance to get at his gun? No; he walked straight in, just as Scottie's glass was at his mouth. Ye would call such a thing bald-headed murder in that old country of yours, I s'pose? But 'twas another thing out Nome way, as it was in the old diggin' days in the Comstock and in Nevada, an' everywhere that I've took a hand at minin'. The notice to shoot at sight had been duly given, an' it was camp-law an' held good till the shootin' had bin got through. It was hard luck, I'll admit, for Scottie to be caught nappin', but that didn't alter the rights o' the matter. Scottie's luck was out an' Hell Fire's was in; that was all there was about it.

Well, in came Hell Fire with his gun in his hand. This he pointed straight at Scottie's head. The glass was still in Scottie's hand up at his mouth, so he had no chance t' get at his gun.

"Drink hearty, Mister Sneak!" shouted Hell Fire, "for it's the last drink ye'll taste! It's my turn now. You had yours when I was full, an' couldn't stand up agin you. Now it's you who is goin' down, never to get up again. Then were quits, see?"

Scottie said never a word. He just stood bolt upright looking straight into Hell Fire's gun.

"I shall give you a minute in which to say your prayers," sneered Hell Fire; "and I guess it'll take a lot o' prayin' to give you a chance!"

The situation was gettin' on my nerves—me as ain't 'sposed to have none—and on them of the boys, too. But all we could do was to look at one another, waitin' for the finale. The sympathy of th' boys, I could see, was with Scottie at bein' caught unprepared. But no one said anythin'. The room was awful quiet whilst we stood there waiting.

Just then, outside the door, which was at my



"Pete sprang for Hell Fire's gun-arm."

back, I heard a sniff. Said I to myself: "That's poor Pete lookin' for his master." With this, unbeknown to anybody in the room, I quietly

lifted the latch, and in came Pete. He gave me a passin' sniff and a wag of his tail, and then went straight up to his master. He put his

paws on his master's knee, an' Scottie patted his head with his free left hand.

"T'other hand up!" yelled Hell Fire. "No sneakin' for yer gun wi' that. I'll do that cur in, too!"

My dander rose at that. "Look here, Hell Fire," I said, "I ain't nothin' to do with the quarrel between you and Scottie, an' Pete ain't in it either. But if you touch Pete, I take a hand. See?" And my hand was on my gun quick.

"I've no quarrel with you, Sure-Shot Tom," said he.

"But you'll mighty quick have one if you hurt Pete!" I told him. "That dog's been my best chum in many a long tramp, an' when I was lyin' a cripple here in camp he looked arter me like a Christian. He's bin a good chum to the boys here, too; ain't he, boys? Your mascot, as ye've named him. He's 'Lucky Pete' to all of you. That's the straight ticket, ain't it?"

The boys nodded.

Now Pete, when Scottie took his hand from his head, crouched at his feet, an' looked at Hell Fire. He sensed the situation in one act. He didn't like Hell Fire, an' he knew his master didn't like him either. He sensed that Hell Fire threatened harm to his master. He knew that Hell Fire held in his hand a thing that hurt and killed; he had seen it hurt an' kill things many a time. All this Pete understood, and he acted upon it accordin' to what was in him. For Scottie was not only Pete's master; he was his god, to live for, to die for. That was Pete's creed, and a good creed too, I reck'n.

It was all over in a moment—as quick as lettin' off a blast. Pete sprang for Hell Fire's gun-arm. There was a shot, an' followin' it another; for Scottie had sense and quickness enough to find his gun, an' get one in too.

Hell Fire reeled and fell backward, with a dose of lead in his brain. He had said his last word and fired his last shot, which had missed Scottie.

But lyin' on Hell Fire's body, with his teeth still in Hell Fire's sleeve, was the bleedin' corpse of poor old Pete. Hell Fire's bullet had found its target; but it hadn't stopped Pete's rush.

Scottie was down by Hell Fire's side in a minute, holdin' Pete in his arms. I think Pete just managed to lick his master's face before he closed his eyes.

Poor Scottie was like a man daft.

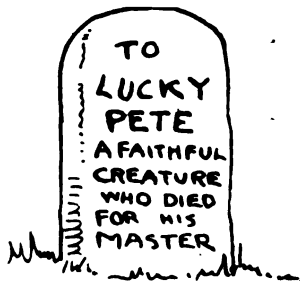
"Boys, boys," he cried, "all I have to save Pete! What is the 'Lucky Pete' claim and all there's in it without Pete?"

But there was no savin' Pete. He had given up his life to save his master.

We gave Pete a public funeral, an' I got Fred Neilson—who, before he took to drink an' went wrong, cut some ice in 'Frisco as a monument artist, an' was with us then in camp—to cut somethin' on a stone over the place we planted poor old Pete.

"And what became of Scottie?" I asked.

"Scottie? He left Gold Town after Pete was buried. He seemed to have no heart left for anythin'. He just gave the good-bye to Miss Maisie, his minin' claims, an' th' whole lot, an' went. I did hear that he joined a Canuck reg'ment an' went to South Africa to fight the Boers. Maybe he was killed there, for I got no more news about him."



"MY STRANGEST EXPERIENCE."

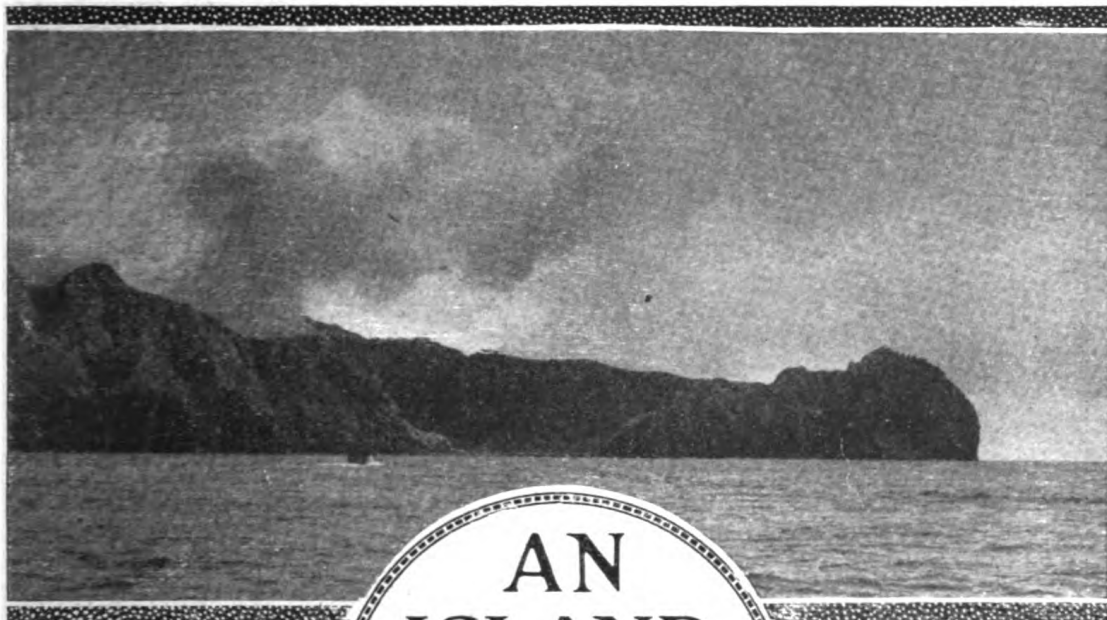
An Interesting New Competition.

It has been well said that "every man has a story in him"—in other words, that no matter how sheltered and apparently uneventful a man's (or a woman's) life may have been, one incident in his or her career, at least, is worth the telling. Yet how many of these stories ever get told outside one's own little circle?

With the idea of bringing some of these unrecorded incidents of everyday life to light, we have pleasure in offering a prize of £10 for the best story received. Narratives may be of any length up to two thousand words, and literary style is not essential; all we require is that the narrative shall be absolutely true, and certified as such, and that it is written plainly on one side of the paper only. For the best story received we shall pay £10, but any others published will be paid for at our usual rates. The Editor's decision must be accepted as final.

Here is an opportunity for our non-literary readers which we hope they will avail themselves of. Whatever your avocation, you must be able to recall some little experience—queer, exciting, uncanny, or humorous—that other people would be interested to hear about. Just jog your memory and set it down.

The Competition will close on June 30th. All contributions should be addressed to The Editor, WIDE WORLD MAGAZINE, 8-11, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and marked "Competition."



AN ISLAND INFERNO by GEORGE BOURNE

Off the north-eastern coast of New Zealand lies an uninhabited island that is a kind of pocket Hades. There seems to be but a thin crust between the daring visitor and the earth's internal fires, and the signs of volcanic activity encountered everywhere are most awe-inspiring.

There is a fortune in sight in the deposits of sulphur, but those who have tried to work them have reaped nothing but death and disaster. Mr. Bourne has visited this uncanny island on several occasions, and his story and the accompanying photographs will be found most impressive.



SITUATED in the Bay of Plenty, within forty miles of the coast of the North Island of New Zealand, is a mass of rock of semi-volcanic nature, known appropriately as "White Island," on account of the great cloud of steam which, rising in vast columns from an old crater-bed of its misshapen interior, hangs perpetually over its storm-beaten promontories and bleak shoreline.

Roughly circular in shape, with a circumference of about three miles, the island is merely the crater-shell summit of what is thought to be a vast submerged volcanic range, and because of coincident action it is generally supposed to be connected with the neighbouring thermal regions of the "Hot Lakes" district of the mainland. It is looked upon as one of several necessary safety-valves of a dominion that boasts of a large number of hot curative mineral springs and other evidences of volcanic activity.

Save for one break in the precipitous encircling walls that for untold ages have guarded the low-lying steam-vents from the

inroads of constant heavy seas, the island is practically inaccessible, and until recent years has for centuries been the unmolested haunt of myriads of sea birds.

At intervals—and then only when favourable weather conditions permitted—a specially-chartered excursion steamer formerly visited the island, a landing being effected at a small indentation named Crater Bay, at the break referred to.

I first visited this uncanny island some ten years ago, and though I have been there several times since, a life-time will not efface the impressions I gathered on my first trip.

From the beach a short rise led up to the old crater-bed, but slightly elevated above sea-level—a large horseshoe-shaped amphitheatre about a mile and a half in diameter. The first thing of interest to catch one's attention here was a small steaming lake of the most vivid yellow-green colour imaginable, occupying the whole of the crater centre. Far away on the opposite side of this highly-coloured sheet of water could be seen the steam-jets of the famous "blow-holes," starting unobtrusively from low situations, in almost insignificant threads,



Facsimile of a paragraph from a New Zealand journal referring to the latest eruption at White Island.

but intermingling and expanding as they rose until they formed vast clouds that wreathed and curled into fantastic shapes as they slowly drifted over the rampart of encompassing cliffs. At that distance, however, we failed to get anything like an adequate idea of their immense proportions, nor could one hear the awful uproar made by the hot sulphurous vapour as it rushed furiously out of the bowels of the earth.

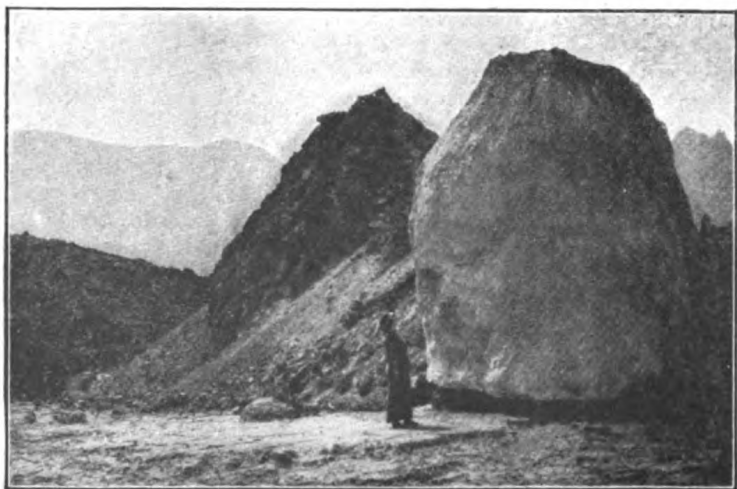
Similar phenomena on a lesser scale, all in erratic eruption, were dotted about the desert-like depression, but the great blow-holes being the most interesting feature of the island, a move was immediately made in their direction. The locality could only be reached by an arduous climb over a vast accumulation of rock and *débris* that had fallen from the fast-decaying walls, discreetly skirting the shores of the warm lake which, in spite of its sombre surroundings, had a strikingly pretty appearance viewed in the bright sunlight of a fine day. Where the fallen matter sloped down in easy gradients small beaches of the strangest and loveliest

formations imaginable were encountered. The flotsam and jetsam of an ordinary sea-beach were replaced by countless millions of shot-shaped globules of solidified sulphur. The process of manufacture of these beautiful beads was in evidence wherever the water was of no great depth. In such places tiny particles of sulphur, in a molten or very plastic state, were continually being forced up through the adhesive mud floor of the lake bottom. Coming into contact with the cooler water, they gradually hardened into globe-like shape. Before long these globules would break away from the parent connection—either by the formation of another bead or by wave action—and would eventually be rolled ashore by the current.

Though a large proportion must have been reduced to powder in the latter process, the beaches were nevertheless packed to a surprising length and depth with the sulphur beads, and some of the deeper hollows must have contained the accumulation of ages.

To a certain extent this sulphur is the explanation of the lake's bright colouring. So strongly are the waters impregnated with sulphuric acid that a splash on clothing rapidly changes the fabric to a deep pink, and in a very short time one's finger can be poked through as easily as one stabs wet blotting-paper. The lake, therefore, is not to be recommended for swimming or boating.

As we neared the northern extremity of the lake, the roaring of the many blow-holes, which were restricted to a confined area close under the beetling crater-walls—at this point over a thousand feet high—became alarmingly loud, making the idea of close inspection a matter of no small apprehension. However, some of the more venturesome members of the party, setting a questionable example, were soon boldly investigating with long sticks the confined orifices of the most easily-

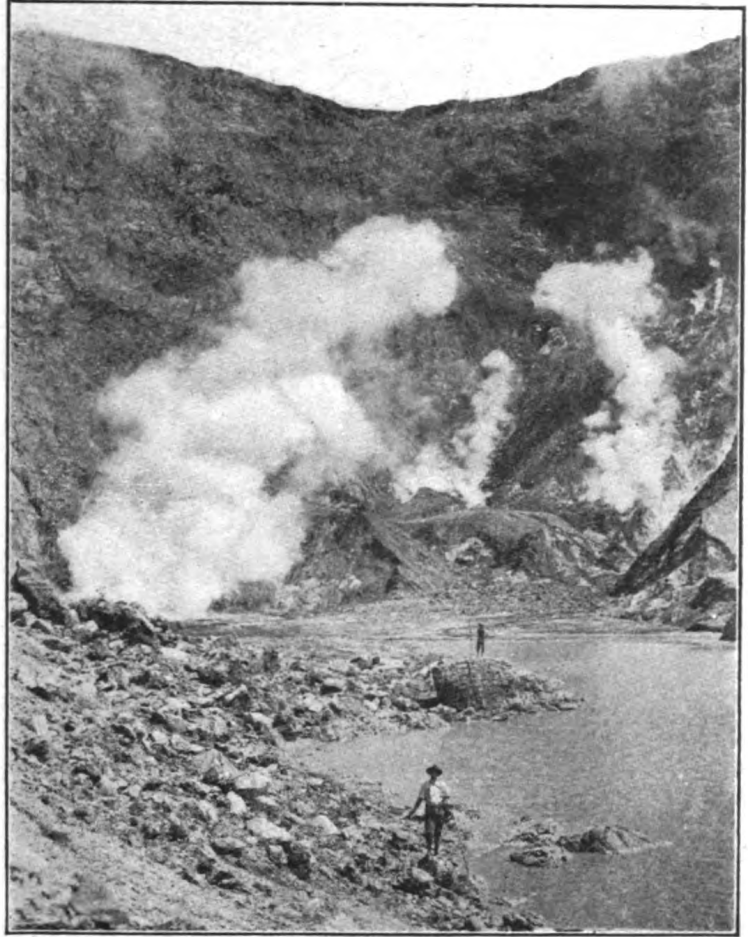


One of the many big boulders brought down from the cliffs by earth tremors.

approached *fumeroles*, or else engaged in friendly competition, throwing rocks into the boiling spray of a nearby geyser, whose pent-up forces, resenting such familiarity, angrily ejected the intruding stones. Others, copying Maori boys of the hot lake district, placed empty bottles, mouth downwards, over the more diminutive outlets, thereby producing a strange melody of not unmusical sounds, varying in tone from the shrill whistle of an incoming train to the more sonorous note of a distant fog-bound steamer. Some of the more ingenious and agile found fine sport in tossing empty lunch-baskets into whirling perpendicular columns of hot vapour, where, after being twisted and suspended after the manner of a cork on a garden fountain, they were at times carried to an incredible height, and finally flung aside to be retrieved by their breathless owners below.

Not until one was in the actual vicinity of the main vents, whose ragged, sulphur-coated fissures appeared ludicrously small for the terrific amount of steam emerging, could any conception be obtained of the irrepressible natural forces that were here let loose from the earth's uneasy interior.

The roar and hiss of the superheated steam as it came in sudden contact with the cooler atmosphere, the clamour, gurgle, and hammerlike thud of imprisoned waters, were positively awe-inspiring, and so absolutely deafening that in the immediate neighbourhood of the largest vents it was impossible to hear a word, no matter how close the speaker's mouth was brought to the listener's ear. From the lake shore—at this point decidedly hot—the ground, serrated into a bewildering chaos of evil-smelling ravines and gorges, sloped sharply up towards the base of the overshadowing heights. Out of a thousand and one hissing crevices of this unapproachable, superheated, conglomeration of rock and silt, the rudely-forced-out overflow of hidden seething pools welled up and poured down to the lower level of the lake in a confusing series of steaming cascades. Boiling springs with a terrifying geyser-like action and stewing "porridge-pot" mud-holes added their quota of nauseous vapour



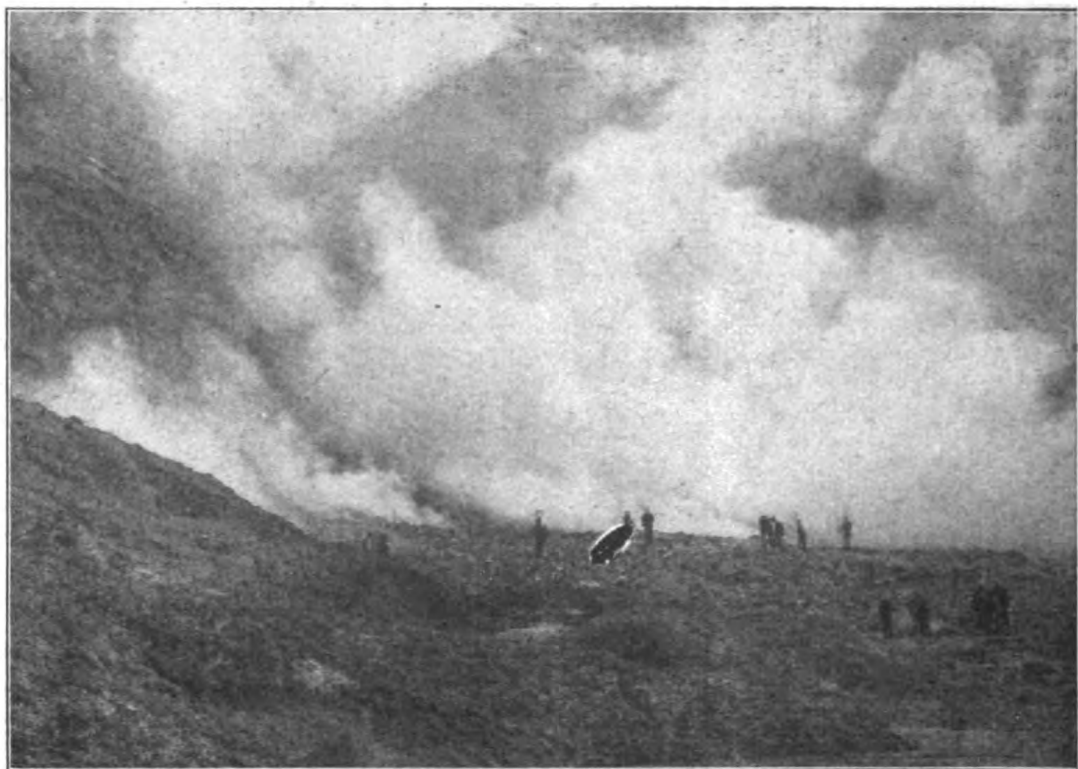
A distant view of the blow-holes, looking across the hot sulphur lake.

and turmoil to the nerve-trying din of this awful inferno.

On account of the treacherous nature of the ground even mild exploration was a hazardous and somewhat foolhardy undertaking, and where the surface crust was unusually thin, escapes from scalding were averted more by good fortune than foresight.

In places, the near surroundings of a particularly closely-confined steam jet were astonishingly dry—a phenomenon caused by abnormal discharges of superheated steam—and many of these openings were beautifully encrusted with coral and fern-like sulphur formations. Some exquisite specimens of the pure mineral were obtained by simply knocking off projections with a sharp rap, and raking them forward with a stick when sufficiently cooled for handling.

There was evidence of very rich deposits of sulphur in this locality, its origin being so recent that sufficient *débris* had not fallen from the adjacent hills to bury it beyond sight, as no doubt had happened in other parts of the island. Turn where one would, solidified sulphur, moulded into grotesque



The famous blow-holes as they appeared prior to the eruption, showing a party of visitors collecting

forms, stood out at every conceivable angle or lay in wild profusion upon the ground. Every hissing fissure was festooned with the valuable commodity in a bewildering variety of shapes, from delightful feathery plumes to dainty, spire-like pinnacles or plain slabs varying in size from inches to yards.

A strange feature noticeable in connection with these above-ground deposits was that, though seemingly from the same source, they were divided into two distinct classes, one possessing the familiar soft-yellow colouring of chemists' shops, while the other, air-dried or sun-baked into a corresponding state of hardness, was of a more pronounced mineralized nature, and of a bright orange-red tinge.

This end of the island certainly did not lend itself to extended stay or close investigation, and with the weirdness of it all impressed on one's mind, it required no great effort of the imagination to picture its horrors at night, or when a storm raged outside.

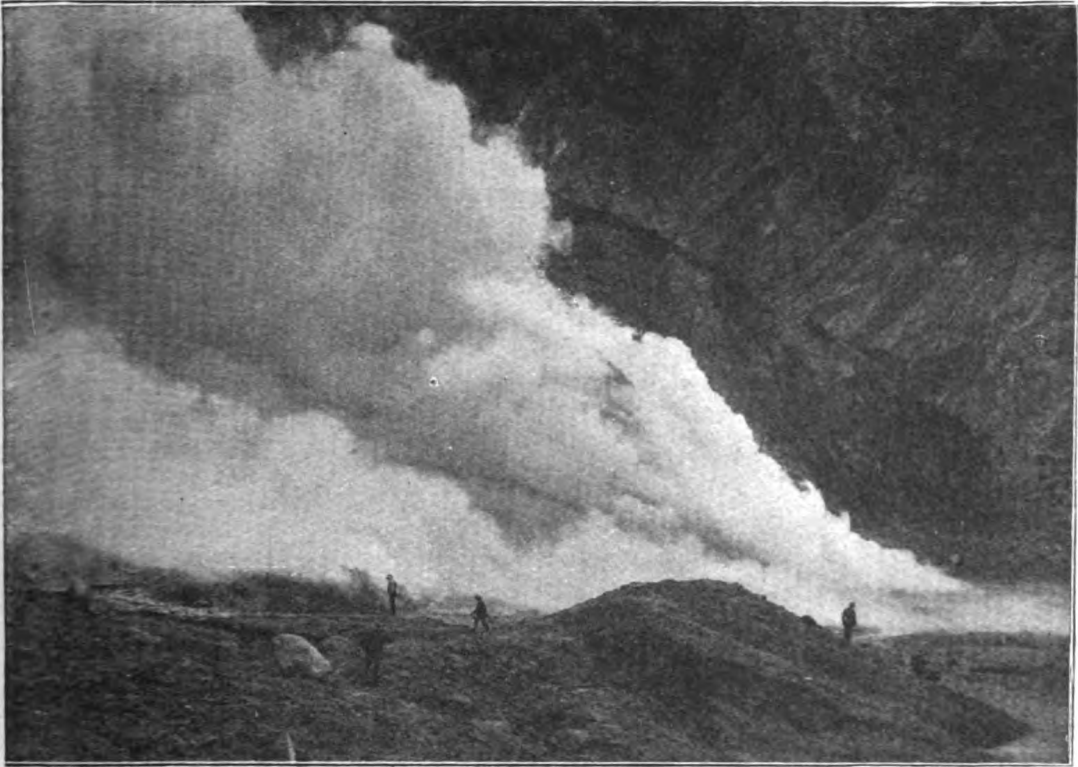
Prior to 1885 White Island was Crown property. It then passed to private ownership, and its rich sulphur deposits were worked on a small scale, the project being abandoned in a great hurry within a year owing to the alarm created by the eruption of Tarawera Mountain, when close on a hundred and fifty lives were lost.

After that the possibilities of the island

remained unexploited for a period of thirty years, when, about twelve months before the outbreak of the Great War, a Canadian company with a capital of £20,000 acquired possession, erected works and dwellings, and commenced excavating operations upon a large scale, one of the first tasks being the drainage of the aforementioned sulphur lake to reach the presumed rich deposits below.

At its best life on this weird island cannot have been very alluring, but the *employés*, averaging twelve all told, no doubt attracted by the high rate of pay, appeared quite contented with the prevailing conditions. As can be imagined, their existence depended upon regular supplies from the mainland, an arrangement existing between the company and a launch-owner of Opotiki, the nearest township opposite, to visit the island weekly, weather permitting.

Operations were hardly in smooth running order when the first signs of the ill-luck that was to wreck this second venture manifested themselves, and an *employé* lost his life in a retort explosion. Before twelve months had passed—the same period as before—White Island got rid of the intruders by means of a terrific eruption, with the largest loss of life since that of Tarawera, the whole of the *employés*, together with the company's extensive plant, being wiped out of existence, presumably without a moment's notice.



specimens of the sulphur deposits. Note the immense volumes of steam escaping from the vents.

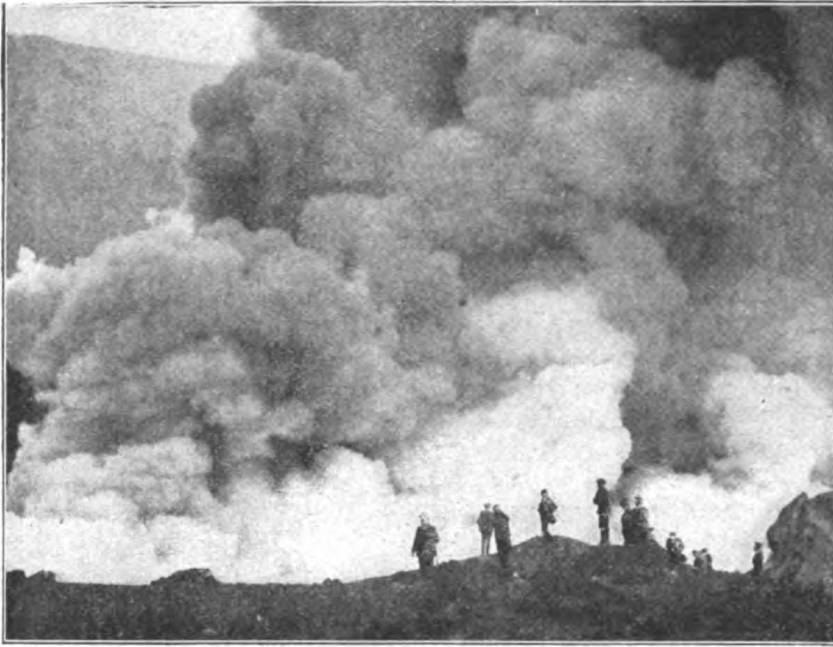
There will always be some doubt as to the actual date of the disaster. The pilot's last visit, when all the members of the party were well, and no mention was made of unusual signs of thermal activity, was on September 8th, 1914. In the interval it had been noted from the mainland that the steam outlets of the island had been unusually active, and a series of earth tremors were felt. A continuation of cloudy weather prevented prolonged view, but in any case the uncanny place was subject to spasmodic outbursts, and though after-events proved that this enlarged activity had a significance, similar disturbances were too frequent to attract more than a passing notice.

According to arrangement, the pilot next visited the island on the 15th of the month, arriving late in the evening. The vessel came close in to the shore, but was unable to land any men, having no dinghy of her own, and depending on a boat that usually put off from the works. The pilot remained off shore until midnight, and, receiving no response to frequent signals, assumed that the men had mistaken the date of his expected arrival, or were working on the opposite side of the island. He therefore returned to Opotiki, and reported his non-success in establishing communication to the company's local agent.

Apprehension being slightly aroused by the

recent active state of the island, the agent got in touch by telegram with the general manager at Auckland, who instantly sent instructions for the pilot to revisit the island. Owing to weather conditions it was not until three days later that a landing was effected by the pilot alone, when it immediately became obvious that earth tremors or an actual eruption had caused a huge portion of the highest cliffs to fall, completely obliterating the camp and workers.

When the disaster was reported to the mainland, a police search-party set out for the scene of the calamity, and further investigation tended to indicate that the great quantity of fallen *débris*, covering many of the blowholes, had directed the pent-up forces to one point, and a terrific eruption had ensued. From appearances it was presumed that the eruption took place in the evening, and that a great avalanche of earth and rock had swept down and driven all before it into the sea through the small openings on the southern side of the island. Portions of the works manager's house, his stretcher bed, and other broken relics were found by the search-party floating in the sea. A pair of heavy truck wheels and a huge boulder weighing many tons, found several chains from where they originally stood, gave some idea of the terrific force of the eruption. The police



The new blow-hole formed after the eruption. The steam-clouds are of a bright mustard-yellow colour.

and other willing helpers cleared away several tons of *débris* from the former site of the workers' dwellings, but the material was still so hot and steaming that the work had to be abandoned.

Three weeks later two launch parties, including the writer, ventured across to the

living object connected with the late works found on the island was a cat, one of five known to be with the sulphur workers. By some miraculous chance it had survived the disaster, and existed precariously during the interval. It was captured and brought back by a former *employé* of the Sulphur Company, who

island. As we approached, the general appearance gave no indication that anything unusual had taken place since our last visit, except that even at a distance the usually white steamclouds seemed to have taken on a yellow tinge as they came into view above the crater's upper rim.

An easy landing was effected, owing to the previous formidable boulder-strewn foreshore being changed temporarily into a smooth beach by the now solidified overflow from the recent upheaval. The only



One of the numerous gannet rookeries on the outer rocks of the island.

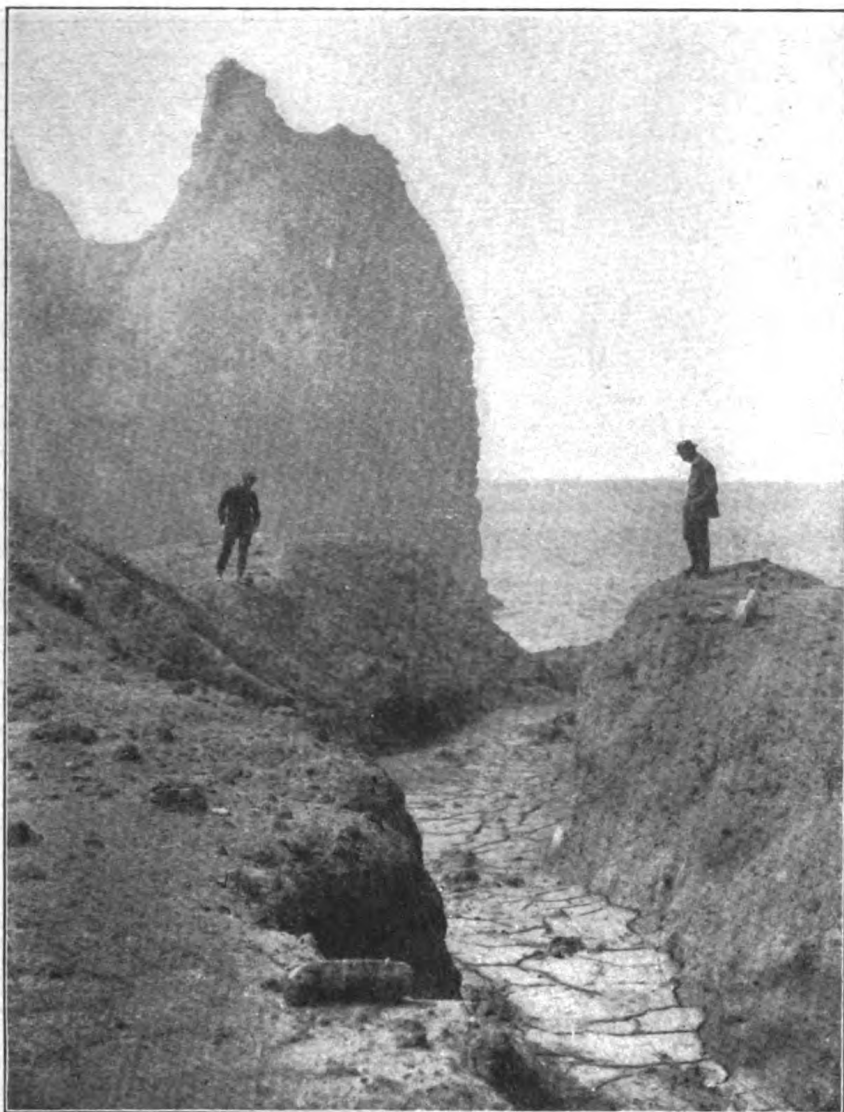
—fortunately for himself—had left the company's service a fortnight before the eruption.

To one who had an intimate knowledge of the island prior to the fatality there was ample evidence that a landslide of incalculable proportions was undoubtedly the contributory cause of the disaster.

Millions of tons of earth, rock, and rubble, breaking away in one vast body at an elevation of not less than a thousand feet, must have crashed down on the old crater floor and shot with ever-increasing velocity across the drained lake-bed until brought up against and divided by the rocky bluff situated behind the workers' dwellings. Mute testimony of the great force with which this mass of rock and silt struck the buttress could still be seen in the gigantic mud-splash extending many hundred feet up its

face. Whether the dwellings, with their helpless occupants, were buried beneath this fast-solidifying mass, or swept out to sea in the first wild rush of the overflow, will never be known, but people familiar with the island believe that a few of the buildings, at any rate, were carried under the bluff, and—crushed and crumpled almost beyond recognition—still lie at varying depths beneath the millions of tons of rock and silt.

Naturally this vast accumulation of fallen matter had changed the old crater interior considerably. Viewed from the old workings, the magnitude of the earth-slide staggered the imagination, the original floor being covered to a depth of many hundred feet, its uneven surface and still-steaming ridges being dotted in places with gigantic boulders as big as houses. Huge fissures were cut down the once comparatively smooth walls,



One of the partly-filled-in sulphur excavations after the upheaval.

and many large rocks still balanced precariously near the summit, seemingly ready to drop suddenly down to the steaming floor below. Gone were the beautiful steam columns that once rose gracefully from the base of the northern cliffs; they were all, apparently, concentrated into one great gaping blow-hole situated somewhere near the centre of the vanished lake. This new steam outlet was easily accessible, and presented a magnificent spectacle.

An enormous volume of vivid yellow-coloured, sulphur-impregnated steam rushed angrily forth from the chasm, and ascended in whirling clouds that completely obliterated the overhead sun. In the immediate vicinity the fumes of sulphur were absolutely overpowering, and safety lay only on the windward side. A change in the wind taking the deadly fumes in the direction of the

landing, the parties were compelled to beat a hurried retreat and return to the mainland. This happened some four years ago, and it is doubtful if the uncanny and undoubtedly dangerous spot has yet been revisited.

Interest in the island has again been roused within



A search-party at work on the site of the sulphur-workers' dwellings.

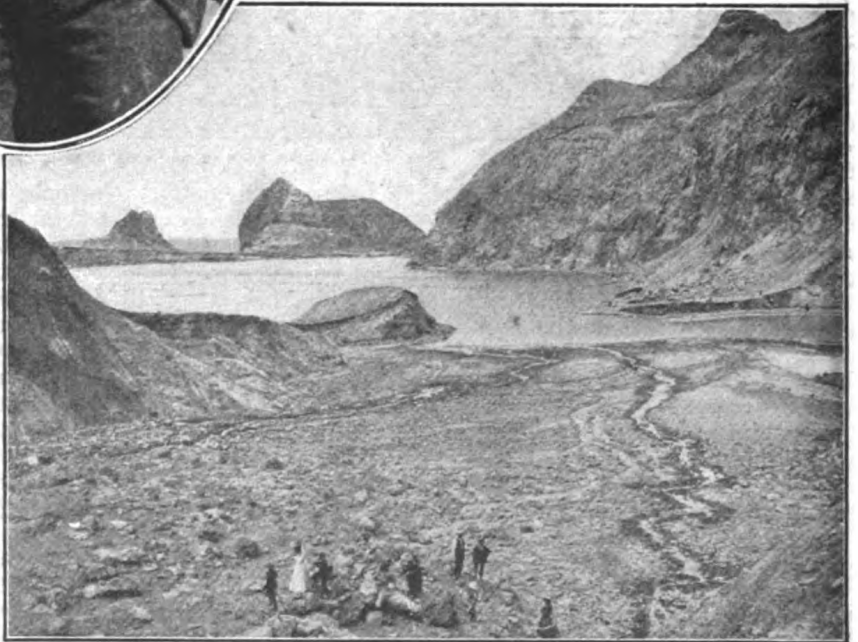


This cat was the only living thing that survived the disaster which blotted out the sulphur works.

recent months by a renewal of subterranean activity on even a grander scale, it is surmised, than that of any of its preceding eruptions. Reliable information from residents of the mainland towns opposite shows that plainly - visible flames have been a prominent feature of these outbursts, and mathematical

observation has recorded the heights of some of the steam-clouds that followed to be not less than eight thousand feet. Many terrific explosions, causing earth-tremors on the mainland, have also been heard.

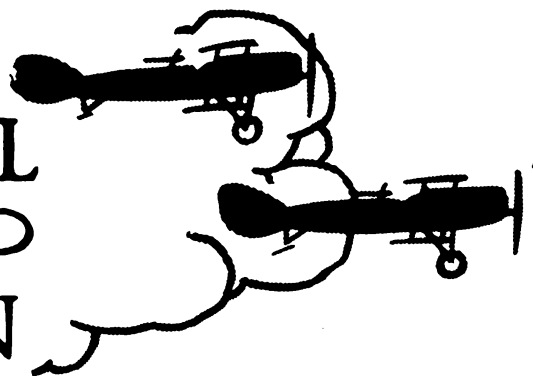
Whether this is the forerunner of something more sinister is a matter for the scientists, but on the mainland the belief is held that so long as the pent-up forces find relief through the open safety-valves of the blow-holes, no danger from devastating volcanic influences need be apprehended. Otherwise people may wake up some fine morning to find that the "Island Inferno" has finally blown its head off and disappeared beneath the waters of the ocean.



The yellow-green sulphur lake, looking back from the blow-holes.

WITH A BRISTOL FIGHTER SQUADRON

by Lieut W. Noble R.A.F.



Illustrated by W. Avis.

There is a saying that the hour brings forth the man, and the record of the Air Service abundantly proves its truth. At a time of desperate need it produced what seemed to the average groundling to be a race of super-men—mere youngsters who were more at home in the air than on terra firma, of boundless courage and audacity, seeking adventure for the sheer love of it, and laughing in the very face of Death. In this narrative—exclusively written for “The Wide World”—the Author describes some of his experiences with a “fighter” squadron on the Western Front. The mission of a “fighter” squadron, as the name implies, is to seek out the enemy and if possible destroy him, and right well did this particular unit carry out its work. Lieutenant Noble has some most thrilling stories to tell, and he also gives one very interesting glimpses of the psychology of the airman in the face of deadly danger.

III.



WHEN I returned to the squadron, ready for another spell of flying, I had missed the great retreat towards Amiens. Our squadron, although some way distant, sent machines daily to bomb and machine-gun the advancing enemy. This was by no means new work for the R.A.F., but never had it been undertaken on such a large scale. One result of this ground-strafting offensive was to “put the wind up” the Hun to such an extent that never again did he expose his troops so recklessly to our attacks. Pilots and observers told me of gorgeous targets—whole battalions on the march; roads full of transport and guns; troops massing for attack. On these they dropped bombs, causing indescribable panic and great losses, whilst the fire of machine-guns caused innumerable casualties. But if the material results were considerable, the most important factor was the effect on the enemy's *morale*. Day by day and night by night he was never immune from molestation by our machines. There was always the possibility of throbbing engines overhead, with corresponding uncertainty as to the movements of the pilots. On the march, in billets, in the mess, when lying down at night—there was always the ever-present fear of aircraft. I have yet to meet the man who can disregard bombing attacks. Their cumulative effect on the nerves cannot be over-estimated. The material damage inflicted by raids may be, and perhaps often is, slight, but they are a very potent factor in

persuading an army of the blessings of Peace. Never was there better Peace propaganda than bombing.

At this time, however, although the Air Force had their “tails up,” and held the ascendancy in the air, our fortunes as a whole were at a low ebb. We had known that the Hun was going to attack in the spring, and our job was plain—namely, to hold him up until the arrival of sufficient reinforcements to turn the scale. If we could succeed the war would eventually be won by the Allies. The enemy *was* held, and the sequel is known to the world.

On my return to the squadron in the early days of April the enemy's initial onslaught had been checked and it was problematical where he would next attack. On the night of April 7th he heavily shelled our front from Lens to Armentières. On the morning of the 9th he recommenced, and after a bombardment of the greatest intensity his attack was launched in a dense fog, some three hours later. The weather invariably helped the enemy, whilst we in our attacks were often unfortunate. An exceptionally dry spring had prepared the ground for an advance, and for two days impossible atmospheric conditions hampered our Air Service. During the greater part of the April “push,” low-lying clouds, storms, and fogs virtually put the Air Service out of action, and there were few opportunities of locating and breaking up his massed attacks, or for obtaining information as to his dispositions and movements.

Throughout the morning and the greater part of the afternoon of the 9th thick fogs prevented observation, and we could do nothing but remain inactive, listening to the shell-fire which, with greater or less intensity, continued without a break. Towards evening the fog lifted slightly, and we were sent to fly over Laventie and Fleurbaix and bomb and shoot down enemy troops. Our bombs were dropped on Fleurbaix, in the streets of which we discerned and shot down some Hun infantry. The next day we were out of action again, and on the 11th only three machines, of which ours was one, went out to reconnoitre the battle-front, flying at a thousand feet, with the clouds immediately above us.

The 12th turned out fine and clear, and it is of my adventures on that day that I propose to write.

I cannot call to mind twenty-four hours in which I have crowded more exciting and eventful occurrences. In addition to making four daylight war flights, we flew for the first and last time at night and crashed the machine, after which we were bombed by the German Flying Corps.

The first "show" was a bombing and machine-gunning expedition to Steenwerck, which had been taken by the Germans on the evening of the 10th. After being called at 5.30 a.m. we drank a cup of hot tea and set off. Each machine carried a bomb, for delivery on town or station. Our objective was distant about twelve miles. There was no need to climb, so we made straight for it *via* Caestre, Fletre, Meteren, and Bailleul. The sun had by now dispelled the low-lying mists and gave promise of a fine spring day.

We passed over Caestre, teeming with railway life, and followed the road to Fletre and Meteren and thence on to Bailleul, a mile or two south of which the German armies were temporarily held up. We crossed the lines and noted that "Archie" had not yet been brought up. *Cac-cac-cac* from below informed us that machine-guns were busy against us, and holes appeared in our wings. Of enemy aircraft there was no sign. We had hoped to have encountered troops on the march, or transport, but on this trip we were unfortunate. Over the town we released our bombs, and clouds of smoke and *débris* from buildings and the sound of explosions followed. We could only hope that we had been lucky and inflicted damage on personnel. We continued flying south for some distance but, meeting with no suitable target for our machine-guns, turned back and made for the trenches. The Huns, on seeing us approach, ducked and took what cover they could. D———dived from a hundred and fifty to fifty feet, firing assiduously the while, and

then "zoomed" up and gave me a chance with the rear gun. This he did four times until, with only a small supply of ammunition left for defensive purposes, in case enemy aircraft should be encountered, he steered for home.

On our return we breakfasted, and prepared for an offensive patrol at 9.30. We did not go on this, however, as the C.O. was informed over the 'phone that the Army Commander wished to know if Hun cavalry were, as had been reported, in the Forest of Nieppe. This is a large expanse of woodland, by far the largest forest over which we were in the custom of flying; being perhaps twice the size of battle-scarred Houthulst. Snugly ensconced in it is the little village of La Motte, the simple dwellers in which have doubtless been from time immemorial devoted adherents of the old seigneurs living in the noble château about which their cottages cluster. Foresters' houses are scattered at intervals alongside the numerous shooting-roads which intersect in regular and parallel lines this venerable domain of the old French aristocracy.

D——— and I were detailed to fly over and report as to the presence or otherwise of enemy advanced patrols.

We wasted no time in setting off and headed straight for the Forest, over which we steered an irregular course until perfectly satisfied that the enemy were nowhere in possession. Flying at two hundred feet, there was no difficulty in discerning all movement. All we found were a few deserted tents, a number of straggling troops resting and cooking in the vicinity of the château, and some peasants fleeing with their worldly possessions from the momentarily-victorious Hun.

Our report was telephoned to the Army within twenty-five minutes of having received our orders. The rôle of the Air Force is the obtaining of information, and this was a startling example of the reformation the era of flying has effected in the branch of the service known as Intelligence. The distance to the centre of the Forest from the aerodrome was roughly ten miles. Thus we had accomplished without any possibility of mistake and without risk, in twenty-five minutes, what, in the days of scouting by cavalry, could only have been done in three or four hours, and then with difficulty and danger.

At midday we accompanied five other machines on another bombing expedition to Steenwerck. We flew at two thousand feet. *En route*, a number of white bursts around three specks far above, gave us the information that the Huns were to-day displaying unusual temerity, and were giving our Archie gunners opportunities for target practice.

There was no sign of life in the town or



"By way of retaliation, I blazed away at the upturned faces, levelled rifles, and spitting machine-guns."

station of Steenwerck; the Hun had by now learned the advisability of taking cover on the approach of aircraft. We dropped our bombs on the station and hoped for the best; after which, in the absence of a definite target, we sprayed the station yard and buildings with bullets and, picking up the remainder of the formation, headed for home.

In the afternoon we were detailed for a reconnaissance; information was required as to the enemy's intentions. Our reserves were by no means large, and, to be used to the best advantage, they must be at hand where an attack appeared imminent. We were instructed to pay special attention to roads leading towards Merville, and then to reconnoitre the country south of Bailleul. The latter town was still held by our troops, who were being hard pressed. Of the six machines, ours and another were to fly low, whilst the others remained above as escort. Thus two observers would be enabled to study the country in comparative security.

Always when crossing the lines we carried a bomb. On this occasion the straggling little town of Neuf Berquin had been selected as our objective. So as to be free for the more important work of obtaining information, we made straight for it and "dropped our egg." A few Huns were sighted; but the object of a reconnaissance is to obtain information, not to fight. In fact, it may be said that the *raison d'être* of the Royal Air Force is to get knowledge of the enemy's movements whilst preventing him from learning ours.

We were now free to devote our attention to road movements, whilst at the same time keeping a look-out for hostile aircraft, in spite of machines protecting us. Visibility was fairly good, and roads could be seen for a considerable distance. We flew over the Lys midway between Estaires and Merville. At intervals were distinctly seen motor transport drawn up alongside the road. South of the river a closer scrutiny revealed infantry lining the ditches on either side. They did not fire upon us, so it may be assumed that orders had been given to make every effort at concealment and not to invite attention. For us the opportunity was too good to be lost, and we went low down and took turns at spraying the ditches. Seeing they had been detected, a group of twenty or more commenced to shoot at us, whereupon the fire was taken up by all as we passed by. This, fortunately, enabled me to get a better idea of the number of troops moving towards Merville. Foolishly to allow ourselves to be shot down unnecessarily was far from our thoughts; nor were we out to shoot down the enemy's troops. Our object was to obtain information; and whilst at times a

fight is necessary to achieve one's purpose, it is not justifiable to take risks which might endanger the safe delivery of intelligence. Therefore we climbed again to a position of reasonable safety.

Having noted mentally the approximate numbers of men and lorries on this road, we turned south from Merville and found that troops were also being moved up from Locon, and were distributed at intervals—taking cover on our approach—for four to five miles.

If no further information was forthcoming at any rate we congratulated ourselves on having news of importance for the Army.

Roads leading towards Bailleul had now to be reconnoitred. These all appeared to be deserted. To make sure we came down to two hundred feet, and, rather sooner than we anticipated, were flying over the German front line. *Cac-cac-cac-cac*—the enemy's machine-gunners opened a merry fusillade, which was punctuated by the intermittent crack of innumerable rifles. A lucky shot might at any moment send us crashing to earth. How we got away without a scratch is a marvel. The engine was not damaged; but the wings and fuselage, with fifty-three bullet-holes, caused us to realize on our return how near we had been to "buying it."

Somewhere to our left our companion reconnaissance machine was going through the same ordeal. It received more punctures than ours, many of which penetrated to the engine, with the result that the machine had to be written off as unfit for further service. The pilot contrived to land safely, however, and the observer handed in much useful information.

By way of retaliation, I blazed away at the upturned faces, levelled rifles, and spitting machine-guns. Before I could get off many rounds we had passed over them and were looking down upon friendly uniforms. We passed over our front line and found our troops feverishly digging a new line of trenches covering Bailleul, and extending along the high ground known as the Ravelsburg Heights.

We made for home, landed, and reported to the Intelligence Officer. One of our escorting machines that had disappeared mysteriously when over Hun-land had not returned. Some weeks later we heard that the pilot had been hit in the ankle by a bullet, and the machine had come down out of control. On crashing, no further injury was sustained by either occupant. As they were flying far above us, it gives one furiously to think on the mutability of Fate—that we should pass unscathed through thousands of leaden messengers, whilst they should be brought down by a chance shot at extreme range.

Throughout the day we had been surmising that, owing to the advance of the enemy, it might become imperative for us to vacate our aerodrome and occupy another further removed from active operations. That we had not yet been shelled out was looked upon as in the nature of an oversight on the part of the German command. We confidently expected to be the objective of a bombing raid during the night. Indeed, a Hun machine flying over us at twenty thousand feet had, in all probability, been taking photographs with this end in view. Suddenly, all conjecture was set at rest, and the order came to fly west at once to an aerodrome about ten miles away. Hurriedly we packed up, leaving the bulk of our luggage to be brought on by the transport. D—— and I squeezed a suit-case apiece into my cockpit, and, by the time the engine had been tuned up, we were ready to take off. The name of the village near which the aerodrome was situated was given us, and we started at once, in the wake of other machines.

It was just commencing to get dusk. The sun had, on its setting, left a faint red effulgence, towards which, our course being westwards, we now flew. Never before had D—— or myself been up at night. It was a new experience and we welcomed it, and, as is so often the case, did not realize till afterwards the danger of the situation. The light could not fail to be extremely dim and shadowy before we reached our destination. D—— had to land on an aerodrome unknown to him; and even with the help of flares, a first night-landing is not without an element of risk. But of such thoughts we were, luckily, entirely free. The romance appealed to us, nor was the element of humour lacking. The sight of his observer sitting like a monkey on our suit-cases, with head and shoulders far out of the machine, aroused D—— to derisive laughter. The thought of any trouble had not occurred to him. In the event of the machine turning over on landing my chances were absurdly small; and in a bad crash there were vast possibilities.

On climbing to a couple of thousand feet we found that the sky was full of machines. Other squadrons were on the move, and in the dim light it was hard to distinguish one type from another; soon it became impossible. Those of our own squadron rapidly disappeared, and we were left to carry on as well as we could with rather a vague idea as to where we were going.

It was now getting darker every minute. The uncanny weirdness of the affair struck me forcibly. We seemed so puny, so insignificant in the scheme of things. This, my one night flight, brought home to me very impressively my own littleness.

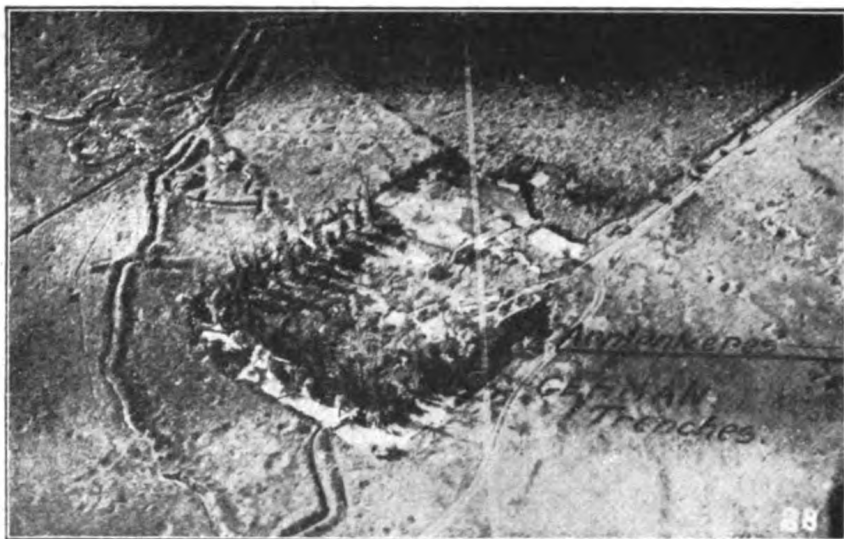
We had passed by a large forest—that of Clairmarais—black and mysterious, when we saw an aerodrome at its edge. Numerous lights were being fired from the ground to direct wandering night-birds; whilst flares, brilliantly burning, lit up the landing-place. Figures, grotesque and fantastical, mingled with 'planes landing and landed.

There appeared to be some confusion and landing here would have been a perilous enterprise. Next day we heard of the crashes—quite a number—with luckily no loss of life, but some damage to limb. We conferred together and decided to go on—if not to our objective, at least to St. Omer, where there was a large aerodrome.

Leaving the Forest to our right, we passed over the flooded area, which lay reflecting remnants of light. St. Omer, dimly lighted and shadowy, was next reached. In its environs, south-west of the town, lay the aerodrome on which we proposed to land. Others had evidently already arrived there; and for the benefit of those following on Very lights were being fired at frequent intervals. Flares were conspicuous by their absence. At one moment the surface of the aerodrome was lit up brilliantly—at the next, it was correspondingly dark. D—— circled round preparatory to landing and, noting the direction of the wind, switched the engine off and glided down.

Still gliding down, there suddenly loomed up to our front a huge mound—apparently a rifle range. Looking down, we seemed to be missing it by inches. D—— opened the throttle and made another tour of the ground. By this time lights were going up in sufficient numbers. We landed slightly faster than usual. The machine made one prodigious hop, came to earth again, and collapsed, with under-carriage in a hopeless muddle, propeller smashed to atoms, and—as we were informed the next morning—the machine as a whole quite beyond repair.

Our adventures were not yet over. There being no accommodation on the aerodrome, we took a tender and made for St. Omer, where we engaged beds and ordered dinner at our favourite hotel. The meal was proceeding merrily, the cooking was good, and vin rouge abundant, when the lights were switched off. This could mean one thing only—the approach of hostile bombing machines. We "carried on" by the aid of candles, whilst the whirr of engines overhead could be distinctly heard. The raiders appeared in no hurry to drop their "eggs." They had probably a definite target—perhaps the station. If so, their sense of location was erratic, for bombs were dropped promiscuously in many parts of the town. For a time none came near us, but when we had congratulated ourselves that the raid was



German trenches near Armentières, photographed from an aeroplane.

France was visible, but soon much of martyred Belgium was also incorporated in the landscape. Still higher, and the bays, harbours, ports, and fishing villages of the coast came within view, followed by shipping on the seas and the indentations and white cliffs of the English coast.

The clear blue of the sky, the calm placidity of the waters, the apparent peacefulness of the countryside, filled one with a

over there was a deafening report, and all the windows of our room were shattered by concussion from a bomb that demolished a house about fifty yards away.

At this juncture the squadron pianist proceeded to the piano and hammered out the opening chords of "A Perfect Day," and this was taken up by all until the rafters rang with the refrain.

The Hun had by now exhausted his supply of "hate," and was making his way homewards. As he did not return during the night a long sleep between sheets, followed by a hot bath, enabled us to make a complete recovery from a day of strenuous endeavour.

It happened on a gorgeous day in late June. The month had been one of most perfect flying weather, and pilots and observers had had a strenuous time.

The squadron had once more definitely settled down to its regular routine of two or more offensive patrols each day. In the previous month we had created a record for the number of "Huns" crashed by a single squadron in any given month. Still possessing the nucleus of the experienced personnel who had been responsible for this, it is hardly necessary to state that our "tails were well up."

Yet as we flew towards the battleground of the skies on this superbly glorious morning it was no easy matter to detach our thoughts from scenes of Peace, and concentrate them on the anticipation of stern, relentless aerial warfare.

As we ascended higher and still higher into the air of heaven the horizon rose to meet us. Moment by moment our range of vision extended. At first only a comparatively small area of the fair land of

feeling of utter detachment. The keen, pure air, exhilarating and inspiring, banished all petty cares.

A formation of scouts approaching from the east roused me from my reverie. They were, needless to say, British; Huns were not encountered on our side of the line. They turned out to be Dolphins—our latest and best machine when in the hands of good pilots. On looking round I found that we were two miles to the north of Hazebrouck. The area over which we were in the habit of flying was all distinctly discernible. To the west its leading features included Dixmude, Ypres, Bailleul, and Neville. Eastwards our range of offensive action was bounded by Thourout, Roulers, Inglemunster, Courtrai, Tourcoing, Roubaix, and Lille.

Ten miles from the latter lay Armentières, which, as a result of persistent bombing, was a hot-bed of anti-aircraft guns. Each of our machines carried a 112lb. bomb for delivery on the station of this important distributing centre. As we had no bomb-sights, our missiles seldom hit their objective; but the uncertainty as to where they would fall cannot fail to have instilled a wholesome dread into the dwellers over a large area.

The lines had been crossed south of Dickebusch Lake, and we had passed over Kemmel Hill—reduced by incessant shelling to the semblance of a huge sand-heap. Thence the leader made for Armentières, where "Archie" gunners were doubtless on the *qui vive* for their favourite target—a strong formation of "fat" two-seaters.

To reach the station it was necessary to fly over the town, and we were not left long in doubt as to the nature of our reception. In a few moments our machines were in a

vortex of swirling black puffs which, accompanied by hectic woufs, arrayed themselves in front and behind, above and below them. The barrage was really good, both in quantity and quality, but to be turned back by "Archie" is an unknown occurrence.

Our formation was, in spite of "Archie's" hostility, well bunched together—an undeniable proof of good *morale*—and turning some way west of the station so as to fly parallel with the rails, the leader led us over it. A few seconds later twelve bombs were speeding earthwards and doing their "bit" towards winning the war.

For some time a number of black specks had been visible, apparently circling round above Lille. Probably they were gaining height with the ultimate object of scrapping us. When at about the same height as the centre of our formation of twelve, they flew leisurely towards us. There were ten of them, and the half-hearted manner in which they approached gave the undeniable impression that the pilots were not keen on a fight.

As they came nearer it was seen that the formation was composed of Pfalz Scouts and Fokker Biplanes. The latter had only recently made their bow before the British Air Force, and were considered superior to anything the enemy had in the skies.

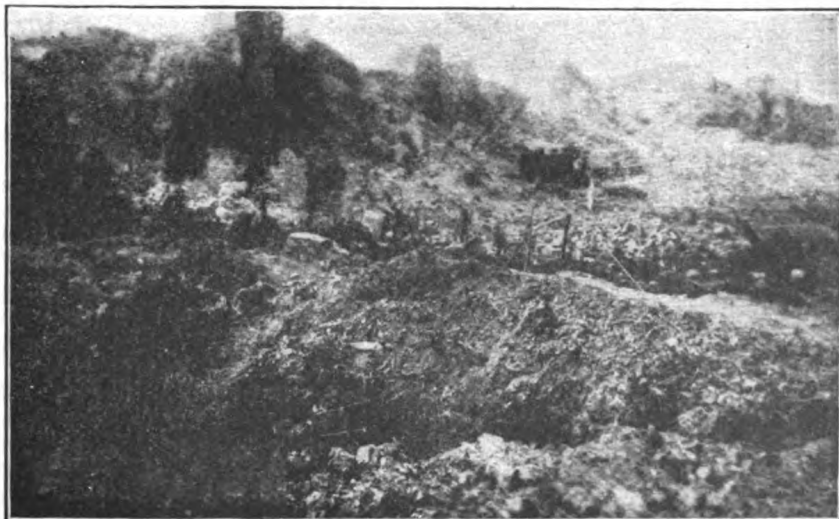
Following the leader, our formation had been steadily climbing, with the result that by the time the clash came our machines one and all had the advantage in height. As we had the sun behind us, it is just possible that we were unobserved until, on a red light being fired from the leader's machine, we dived upon them. They immediately put their noses down and dived under our formation, when they zoomed up again. Had they made for Hun-land matters would have been simplified for us—we could have continued our dive. As it was, our machines had to be pulled out preparatory to diving again. The result was that—as so often occurs when the first attack is not successful—a "dogfight" ensued.

My pilot (D— had gone on leave to England), one of the best the squadron possessed, had only fired a few rounds when his gun hopelessly jammed. A moment after-

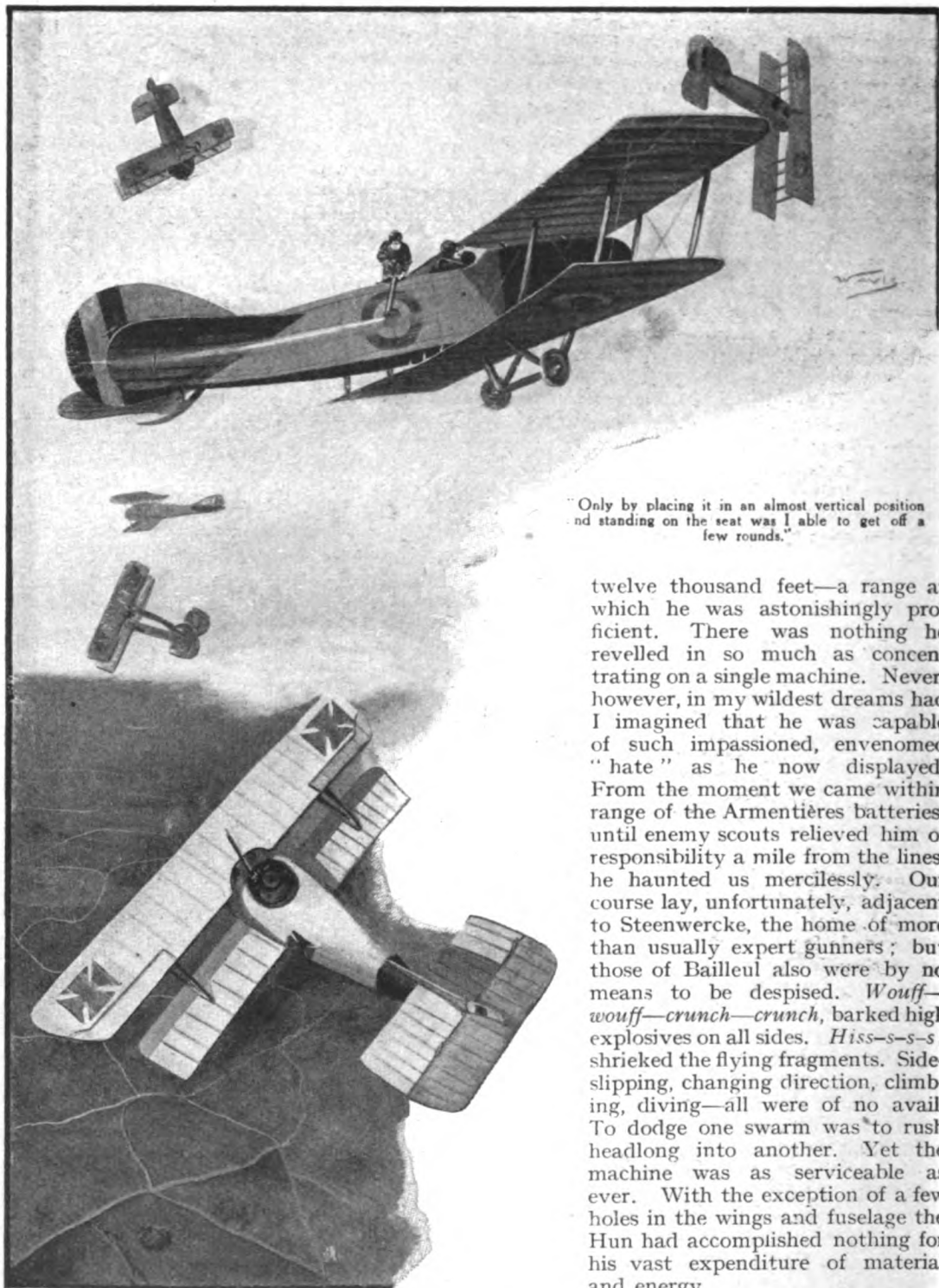
wards a black-crossed camouflaged bird flitted by underneath our machine and only about fifty yards away. She was almost in a "blind spot," i.e., in a position in which I could not bring my gun to bear upon her. Only by placing it in an almost vertical position and standing on the seat was I able to get off a few rounds. Results, as might have been expected, were not apparent. Almost immediately afterwards another Hun flew by a hundred yards to the right and below me. This was a comparatively easy shot; I sighted and pulled the trigger. Three rounds only rewarded my efforts. Cursing volubly, I examined the gun and found that the striker had broken. Of this we did not carry a spare part, and my gun was therefore useless. Our machine was now in the general *mêlée* without a single serviceable weapon!

The pilot conferred with me, and we came to the conclusion that we had better make our way back over the lines. Possibly it would have been better policy to have climbed well above the fight and to have "sat" there until the Huns were defeated and chased away. We could then have placed ourselves in the centre of the formation and, when near the lines, could have separated from the remainder and crossed without fear of molestation. As it was we had over ten miles to fly over enemy country without any means of defence—an adventure that I would not again enter upon lightly, as may be gathered from subsequent events.

We were about three miles south-east of Armentières when we started to make for home. The pilot headed for the nearest part of the line, which was slightly east of Bailleul. Luckily we were helped by the wind, which increased our speed by twenty or more miles an hour.



Kemmel Hill.



"Only by placing it in an almost vertical position and standing on the seat was I able to get off a few rounds."

twelve thousand feet—a range at which he was astonishingly proficient. There was nothing he revelled in so much as concentrating on a single machine. Never, however, in my wildest dreams had I imagined that he was capable of such impassioned, envenomed "hate" as he now displayed. From the moment we came within range of the Armentières batteries, until enemy scouts relieved him of responsibility a mile from the lines, he haunted us mercilessly. Our course lay, unfortunately, adjacent to Steenwercke, the home of more than usually expert gunners; but those of Bailleul also were by no means to be despised. *Wouff—wouff—crunch—crunch*, barked high explosives on all sides. *Hiss—s—s!* shrieked the flying fragments. Side-slipping, changing direction, climbing, diving—all were of no avail. To dodge one swarm was to rush headlong into another. Yet the machine was as serviceable as ever. With the exception of a few holes in the wings and fuselage the Hun had accomplished nothing for his vast expenditure of material and energy.

All went well for a couple of minutes. No enemy aircraft were to be seen. But we had not reckoned upon the grim tenacity displayed by "Archie," when on a clear day he spots what he takes to be a "lame duck" retiring from a fight. We were flying at

Six miles of the journey had been covered. Behind us trailed back puffs, at first clearly defined, and at last so intermingled that our course could be compared to that of an ocean liner leaving a drifting smudge to mark its progress.

When near Steenwercke I experienced the

fright of my life. The tail suddenly shot up into the air and the machine dropped like a stone for two hundred or more feet through the smoke of the exploded shell. Strange to relate we were not touched by the flying fragments. Shortly afterwards there was a loud *crunch* most alarmingly near. Looking round I saw that a wire had snapped—luckily it was not a vital wire.

Almost at the same moment the engine stopped, having been switched off by the pilot. As we found out on landing, a piece of flying metal had cut clean through the exhaust pipe and the front petrol tank. It was extremely lucky that we did not go down in flames. On being deluged with petrol the pilot let go of everything in the machine and, using both hands, opened the radiator vane. Then he switched off the engine, cut off the petrol, and pulled back the throttle. After giving the petrol in the front tank time to escape, he cut off the pressure tap and switched on again.

By this time we were approaching Bailleul. "Archie" had given us no respite. Through efforts to dodge him and the engine having been switched off for a time we had lost height and were now at six thousand feet. Needless to say "Archie" had not diverted me from searching the skies diligently for enemy machines. In our present plight we should have been the coldest of "cold meat" to even the most useless pilot in the German Flying Corps. On the other hand, an attack by hostile planes would bring with it relief from "Archie's" incessant din.

This is precisely what *did* happen.

Three specks had been growing larger for some minutes, diving in our direction from enemy country. I had hoped they were British machines, but as they came nearer it was plainly evident that they were Pfalz Scouts.

When about two thousand feet above us two of the Scouts pulled out of their dive and "sat" up above whilst their companion continued towards us. He did not appear over-confident. Had he taken his courage in both hands and come straight for us I

should in all probability not be alive to tell the tale. Within shooting range, the fact that we were without a serviceable rear gun would have been self-evident.

Whatever may have been his ideas on the subject, he was content to flatten out three hundred yards or so to our rear and slightly above. At this rather hopeless range he commenced to fire, but not a single bullet found its mark. As he appeared to be gaining confidence and to be creeping nearer, it occurred to me that my Very pistol might be of some utility. Loading it with a red light, I fired it up into the air. This was followed in quick succession by three others, whereupon the Hun turned and climbed towards his companions. Having been a witness of our ignominious "strafing" by "Archie," he can hardly have thought that we were acting as bait. It is likely that he interpreted the lights as a call for assistance to British machines which we had seen and he had not. In any case, it was a vastly humorous incident.

A few more moments, and we were over the trenches. My pilot flew at a low altitude and with extreme care, being apprehensive



A German Pfalz Scout machine.

lest a fire should break out, but arrived at the aerodrome without further incident. Landing is unfortunately a corollary to all flights. I was by no means sure that our wheels or undercarriage had not been "damaged" by "Archie." Such an event would make landing a dangerous proceeding at all times—just now, however, it was the one thing to be avoided owing to the probability of fire. There was no need for pessimism, however. A perfect landing was made, and our troubles were over.

(To be concluded.)



In these articles, specially written for "The Wide World Magazine," Mr. Philby gives a thrilling account of his travels in Central Arabia among the Wahhabi Arabs, perhaps the most fanatical and puritanical people in the world. The Author is the only living Englishman who has crossed

MY
ADVENTURES
AMONG THE
WAHHABI

by
H. J. B. Philby
CIE. I-C-S

Arabia, and about one-third of his journey—made in Arab costume to avoid arousing the suspicions of the Bedouin—was over entirely unknown country. For this reason his narrative and the accompanying photographs will be found of exceptional interest.

III.



NE evening during our stay at one of these villages I was sitting quietly reading in my tent when my attention was arrested by an uproar close at hand, followed by ominous cries of "To your arms! To your arms!"

I seized my rifle and rushed out, to find some of my companions putting the camp into a state of defence, while not far distant a heated altercation was going on between the remainder and an ever-growing number of the villagers, who were swarming out of their houses like angry bees disturbed by a careless intruder. Both parties were armed to the teeth, but we were hopelessly outnumbered, besides having all the disadvantage of an exposed position in the open within easy range of the house-tops of the village shown in the accompanying photograph.

I awaited from moment to moment the sound of the first shot which might well be the signal for a general mêlée, but fortune favoured us; that first shot was never fired, and the angry voices of the disputants died down in due course to a series of inarticulate splutterings of disgust and scorn as the two sides drew away from the arena. A trivial matter had nearly precipitated a conflagration; my companions had quite unnecessarily gone into the village to demand supplies and had been in-

sulted with cries of "Infidels," in pointed reference to the fact that they were in attendance on me.

This was by no means our last encounter with the hostility of the denizens of Wadi Dawasir, for while we were on the march a few days later to the capital of the province, a small town of mud hovels called Dam, news was brought to us that a meeting of the town council, at the instigation of the local ecclesiastical authorities, had decided to refuse us admittance to their domains, hitherto unsullied by the tread of an infidel. As a precaution they had sent out a picket to the fringe of the oasis to prevent our passage, if necessary by force. This news was somewhat disconcerting and necessitated the utmost caution on our part. We had gone too far to retreat, and at the same time we knew that to advance at once must bring us into contact with the hostile scouts. In true Arab fashion, therefore, we decided on a compromise, and sent forward a message to the governor of the province saying that we proposed to delay our arrival till the morrow



A hamlet in the oasis of Sulaiyil, where a quarrel between the Author's party and the villagers nearly led to trouble.



The market square of Ziifi, in Central Arabia.

and would hold him responsible before Ibn Saud for any unpleasantness that might then occur. Next morning we resumed our march, threading our way through sand-hills which veiled our goal from view until we were upon it. We now decided to reconnoitre before going any farther and, dismounting from our camels in the dip between two ridges, climbed to the top of a little knoll to survey the land. About a mile distant lay the outer fringe of palms, which for all we knew might be picketed with marksmen thirsting for our blood; beyond it lay the scattered groves and hamlets of the great oasis; and over all brooded a stillness as of death. Not a soul was to be seen anywhere. Here we broke our fast before taking the final plunge. In a few moments we were off again, steering just a little wide of the treacherous palms, and had not gone far when we espied a body of horsemen in the distance moving slowly towards us. Our rifles were unslung and loaded ready for use, and a moment of tension occurred as the distant cavaliers broke into a wild gallop towards us, shouting and brandishing their arms; but the Arab in his playfulness greets his friends as he would his enemies, and when the horsemen came near we found to our relief that they had come as an escort from the governor. So far all was well, but the news they brought was not so good. The pickets had been withdrawn from the outskirts of the oasis, but had been posted round the town of Dam itself, and the governor warned us that he could not answer for our safety if we refused to rest content with this concession. It was clear that we must give the hotheads of Dam more time to cool, and we decided accordingly to halt where we were for the day and to send a further ultimatum to the governor. Our tactics were again rewarded with success,

and we had the satisfaction of arriving soon after dawn of the next day under the walls of the troublesome town, to find the house-tops dotted with disgruntled spectators of their own discomfiture. There are moments in one's life which can never be forgotten, and among such I count those five minutes of our march along the outer wall of Dam to the security of the governor's

castle beyond—five minutes of tensest silence, enhanced by the reflection that every man on those house-tops was sullenly wondering which of us was the infidel, for among these ignorant fanatics it is an



A shady palm-fringed lane in the oasis of Anaiza.

article of faith that the killing of an unbeliever is the surest passport to Paradise.

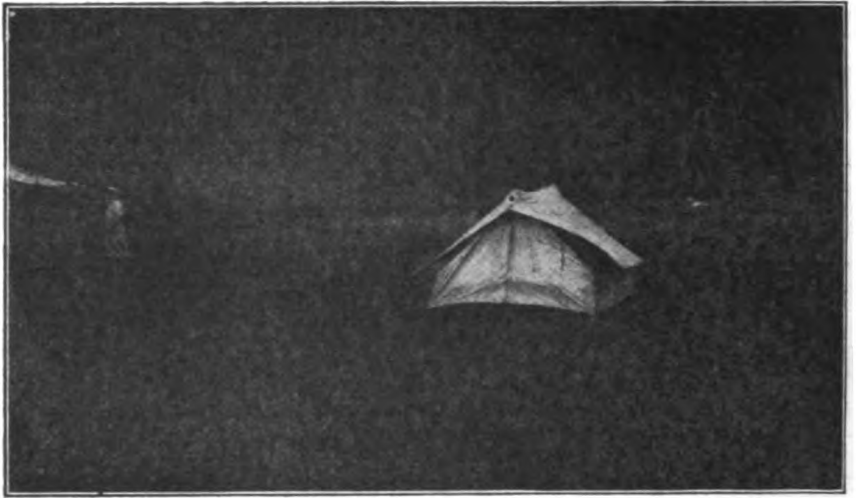
The governor of the province found himself in the unenviable position of being forced to act as our host, on pain of losing his appointment, and—to his credit be it said—he entertained us extremely well and fully in accord with the traditions of hospitality which obtain among the Arabs.

A fellow-guest in the official residence of the governor happened to be a truculent but interesting brigand chief, who was here on a visit from the southern province of Najran and who, happening during the first day of my stay to be seated at my side at the governor's public reception, was courteous enough to explain that, though the wishes of Ibn Saud and the law of hospitality necessitated civil treatment even of an intruding infidel, he would much have preferred to use the dagger at his belt on my throat had the circumstances been different. I glanced at the jewelled sheath of the dagger to which he referred, and praised its workmanship—Najran is famous for the excellence of its inlaid gold and silver work—whereon the tone of the brigand changed and his eyes lit up. "I will give it you," he said, "but what will you give me in return?" I regret to this day that I did not seize the

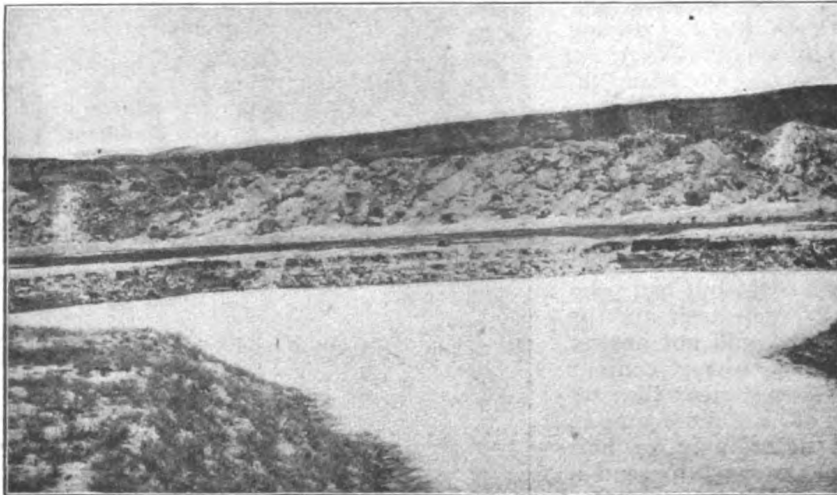
opportunity of purchasing the beautiful weapon, for next day the man was gone, and I saw him no more.

Having now reached the most southerly point possible in the time at my disposal, and having stayed a week at the capital of Wadi Dawasir, I was reluctantly compelled to resume my journey in the reverse direction towards Riyadh. Our march now lay along the summit of the Tuwaiq plateau, in ascending to which from the plain we had to negotiate a narrow and precipitous ravine. Sheer cliffs of sandstone rose to a height of five hundred feet on either side of a boulder-strewn bed seldom more than a few yards wide; the torrent-bed, now dry, served us for road, but was at intervals completely blocked by some great fall of rock, over which the hand of man had roughly hewn out a narrow pathway negotiable with care by loaded animals. One of our camels

slipped off the precarious ledge and injured its leg seriously enough to necessitate its destruction, but this was in reality a blessing in disguise. For several days we were to pass through country utterly desolate, in which we had no chance of replenishing our larders by the purchase of sheep from wandering shepherds, and the flesh of the lost camel supplied the deficiency. In this



This remarkable snapshot was taken during a sandstorm.



A big rain-water reservoir near Riyadh. The Arabs believe that these rock-hollows were made by falling stars.



Members of the Author's escort at afternoon prayer in the desert.

upland region water was everywhere plentiful enough in pools which had been left by the winter rains, while of our staple food, rice and dates, we always carried a sufficient quantity. For meat, however, we had to depend on chance, and it was no uncommon experience, during my sojourn in Arabia, for us to go four or five days with no meat except the chance product of the chase—a hare or lizard.

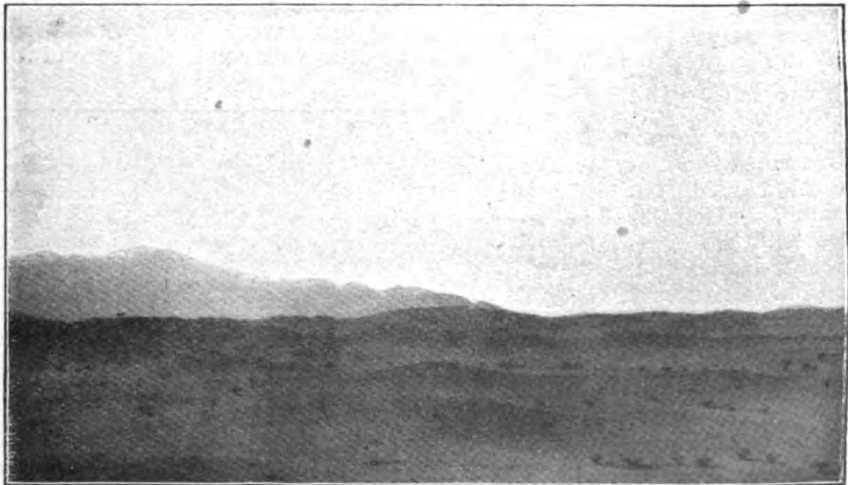
Slowly but surely we lessened the distance between ourselves and the Wahhabi capital, and before we reached it we were overtaken by the month of Ramadan, the month of fasting, during which the Wahhabis strictly observe the dictates of their faith and taste neither food nor water from sunrise to sunset—a matter of fifteen hours at the midsummer season, during which the month fell that year. As may readily be imagined, the temper of people condemned to so severe a penance left much to be desired, and we counted ourselves fortunate in that we experienced an exhibition of it only on one occasion. We were proceeding down a narrow mountain valley, and had just passed a group of Bedouin tents when their inmates, who had heard of my coming from an indiscreet messenger whom I had sent ahead, came out to abuse us. A couple of my companions, in the heat of the moment, returned the abuse with interest, and in a trice we found ourselves confronted with the male and female population

of the tents, the former armed and menacing and the latter encouraging them to deeds of valour in terms that would have done credit to the fishwives of Billingsgate. But the Arab is a curious person, and just when it seemed that the exchange of abuse had reached the point when an armed conflict was inevitable, both

sides arrived at the satisfactory conclusion that it was not worth our while killing each other, and we resumed our journey, sped by the best wishes of our late assailants for our early destruction.

So, in due course, after a journey full of interesting experiences, which my space does not allow me to describe, we re-entered Riyadh one afternoon at the very height of the fast to find the Wahhabi capital sunk in a torpor of sleep under the shimmering blaze of the midsummer sun. The fast of Ramadan is kept in Riyadh perhaps more strictly than in any other Mohammedan city, for while in Egypt, India, and Mesopotamia those who strictly observe the obligation to fast during the day make amends for their penance by feasting and revelry at night, the Wahhabis are permitted no such indulgence and, especially during the last ten days of the month, spend the greater part of the night hours in strenuous prayer.

The month of fasting ends with the appearance of the moon, which ushers in the next month of the Moslem lunar calendar,



A scene in the highlands of Central Arabia.



The pilgrim track through a mountain range. The soft pads of hundreds of thousands of camels bound for Mecca have left their mark on the hard rock of the road.

but the moon must be seen by human eyes before the Festival of the Breaking of the Fast can be celebrated. I was at Riyadh at the time and, being asked by Ibn Saud whether the moon would appear on a certain date and having previously consulted my Nautical Almanac, ventured on the prophecy that it would. That evening the house-tops of the city were crowded with anxious watchers, but strain our eyes as we might the slender crescent of the new moon eluded our search, and it was decreed that there would be another day of fasting. Doubtless there were some who were pleased that my prophecy had failed, but my triumph came later in the evening, for about midnight,

while I was asleep on the roof of the palace, I was startled by the booming of a gun, repeated several times, and on inquiring the cause was told that two Arabs had come in from a place some distance away to announce that they had seen the crescent, and the fast had been formally declared at an end on the strength of their evidence.

The southward course of Wadi Hanifa led me not unnaturally to a somewhat lengthy digression on the interesting and hitherto unexplored country comprising the southern section of Wahhabiland, but it is time for me to return to a description of my earlier journey across the heart of Arabia from east to west, which I left at the precipitous rocks of the Saqta gorge. Between this point and the lofty range of the mountains of the Hijaz lies the true desert of Central Arabia, a vast wilderness of sand and rock, with but few oases to break its grim monotony. In its midst lies the true Najd or Highlands of Arabia, a series of mountain chains of between five and six thousand feet in height, running from north to south for a hundred miles or more. Previous travellers from the centre towards the west had skirted the northern fringe of this mountainous district, but I think I can justly claim that I was the first to cross it on a central line and along the track followed for centuries by the inhabitants of the Wahhabi country on their way to perform the rites of pilgrimage at the House of God in the holy city of Mecca, the spot towards which the faces and thoughts of the Moslems of the whole world turn five times each day at the appointed hours of prayer. The photograph here reproduced shows the pilgrim track running over a pass in the most easterly of the mountain chains of Najd, where the rocky soil has been marked indelibly by the soft pads of hundreds of thousands of camels.

Here and there in this highland tract we passed through some lonely oases, but they were very few, and from the time we passed beyond the second of the ranges till we



A typical cemetery in Central Arabia.



The Author's caravan halted at the wells of Sakha, in the western desert.

reached the western frontier of Ibn Saud's territories there was nothing but desolation about us on every side. At one of these villages, called Quaiyya, I found an excellent specimen of a cemetery of true Wahhabi type. The puritanical doctrines of this sect are bitterly hostile to anything that may have the appearance of worship or even undue respect for the dead, and its cemeteries are a practical exposition of its tenets. A dead person is buried in a grave almost flush with the ground, no monument is reared above it to commemorate even his name, and the utmost that is done is to set up plain rough stones at the head and foot of every grave to mark its position for the information of future grave-diggers. One relic of superstition, however, still remains, for when they bury a woman they place an extra stone over the middle of her grave in the belief that a woman's spirit,

being lighter and more excitable than a man's, may emerge from the grave to protest against the forgetfulness of her spouse if precautions are not taken to keep her in her proper place.

In this desert the distance between wells, on which the traveller depends, is often

great. For days on end the camels move on without thought of water, but human beings, even in Arabia, are endowed with no such powers of endurance, and water has to be carried from stage to stage in whole sheepskins.

The arrival of a caravan at a group of wells is a great moment in every journey; there is no time to be lost, for foes may visit wells as well as friends, and it is seldom that one delays more than an hour or two, but in that time much work is got through. First of all the camels are watered, for the first thought of the Arab is ever for his beast; then the empty waterskins are replenished, and finally the Arabs strip and enjoy a bath in the water from which the next visitor will have to drink. The above photograph shows the occasion of our arrival at the wells of Sakha, situated in a great hollow surrounded by a sea of sand.

(To be concluded.)

A SPLENDID NUMBER!

The following exclusive items will appear in the next issue of THE WIDE WORLD MAGAZINE. Order your copy **now** or you may be disappointed.

THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING NUN.

One of the most puzzling stories you ever read, offering a problem that would have baffled Sherlock Holmes himself.

THE MADDEST EXPLOIT OF THE WAR.

Describing how a soldier, losing touch with his regiment, and knowing nothing of the Armistice, set out to pursue the sullenly-retreating German Army single-handed! His amazing adventures read like a chapter from "The Three Musketeers," but they are officially vouched for.

MANY OTHER STORIES AND ARTICLES.

Queer Fixes

I.—THE SARANG'S STORY.

By J. M. McILDOWIE.

ILLUSTRATED BY STANLEY L. WOOD.



N the Sunderbuns, the great network of waterways forming the delta of the Ganges, the river steamers are built after the manner of house-boats.

The steering is done from a little closed-in house on the bridge; and from this cabin amidships runs, fore and aft, a long footway bounded on each side by an iron railing, on which one can walk along until, looking downwards, the bow is visible.

From this point of vantage it is possible on occasions to see deer, various forms of bird life, and monkeys at the water's edge; even tigers and leopards are to be seen as they come down to drink in the cool of the evening.

I had been for a short river trip, and one night, whilst we were sitting on the above-mentioned gangway, I determined to ask the old *sarang* (captain) whether tigers were a common sight to him; for a friend had told me that he had seen with his own eyes a tiger swim from one side of the river to the other. Big cats do not as a rule care to go into water when they can avoid so doing; and I was determined to verify, if I could, my friend's statement.

Turning to the old man, I inquired in my best Hindustani—he did not speak English—whether it was a common thing for tigers to swim the river. Quite a common occurrence, he assured us; at one time he had seen as many as five tigers all swimming together—and this I can well believe, because tigers (not leopards) often hunt together in parties of from three to five, consisting of father, mother, and two or more youngsters.

When we had been talking for a few minutes he said: "Listen, Sahib, and I will tell you of a strange thing that happened one night when I was taking a steamer on this very river from Khulna to Madaripur." And as darkness fell on the river we sat huddled together, wrapped in big coats, whilst the old *sarang* recounted the following:—

Huzur! It happened on a night such as this some years ago. I was on board the *Ghurka*, and

we were bound for Madaripur, which you will pass after two days from now. The night was a very dark one; and having "handed over" to one of my assistants, I and a few others were playing cards. There is little else for us to do, Sahib, and the nights are long. Suddenly I was startled by a cry from the man at the bow. It was not an ordinary cry, Sahib; it was the cry of a man in great fear. Leaving my companions, I rushed to the end of the gangway and looked over. The sight that met my eyes left me cold with fear. There, beneath me, its two eyes burning like green balls of fire, under the searchlight, was a huge tiger—a *khub bara bagh*!

With its body half out of the water, and its fore-paws clinging to the anchor-chain, it was straining in wild endeavours to scramble on board. The man at the bow had fled, and was now hiding among the bags of rice down below. The others had also bolted in terror. What was I to do? In no time the tiger would be on board, and then some of us would undoubtedly lose our lives.

Remembering that the tiger's hold was on the anchor chain, I rushed to the speaking-tube and shouted to the engine-room to ease the chains. Then I crept back again to my observation post, fearing lest the beast should have achieved its purpose.

But, no! There it was, still clinging to the anchor chain. *Rattle! Rattle! Rattle!* went the chain, in answer to my order. The tiger was still clutching wildly, struggling to keep its hold, when, by a sudden jerk of the chain, it was thrown backwards into the water.

Now, I thought, we have got rid of him! But I was wrong; this sudden ducking did not cow the fierce brute. Finding that the boat was travelling very slowly—the night being so dark had prevented our going at anything beyond a snail's pace—the tiger commenced to swim alongside, evidently meaning to have another try at getting on board.

Armed with sticks, with as many of my companions as dared, I went forward to the bow. From there we could see the beast, swimming

along with powerful strokes a few yards from the vessel's side. And now, Sahib, comes the strangest part of the story, for we could see that the *bagh* was almost mad, and determined to get on board.

Our boat was heavily laden with cargo, and lay low in the water. The tiger, swimming closer in spite of our *lathies* (staves) which we waved in its face, seemed to make one great bound out of the water, and this time succeeded in getting both its forelegs firmly planted on the deck close to where we stood.

By this time all the coolies on the steamer were in great fear, and had gone to arm themselves with what weapons they could find. Meanwhile the tiger was snarling and snapping at our sticks, which we pushed repeatedly into its face.



Its rage was terrible to witness, and finally, with one last effort, it pulled itself right up on to the deck and was amongst us. There it crouched, its big tail lashing to and fro, its eyes restlessly darting now here, now there, in readiness to spring. My old bones grow cold even now, Sahib, when I think of that moment! Only a few feet from where we stood it lay quivering, watching us from the depths of those terrible eyes.

Suddenly from behind there came shouts of "*Rasta chor do!*" (Make way there), and on looking around I perceived that one of the men from the engine-room was coming, armed with a red-hot bar of iron. Instantly we allowed him to pass. The tiger, ready to leap, watched our movements with interest. The flaming bar was brought forward. The brute, seeing it was a case of now or never, sprang. Swift as a bolt from a sling his powerful body shot through the darkness, crushing the foremost of our party.



"There it crouched, in readiness to spring."

Then he stopped and, lifting his head, looked about him.

With a yell the man with the flaming bar tore forward. There was a hissing sound and a smell of burning flesh as the long bar, driven by strong arms, entered the brute's chest.

The tiger, uttering a mighty cry, leapt backwards, lost his balance, and fell with a dull splash into the water. A few seconds later we saw him swimming towards the bank. It was a terrible experience, *Huzur*; and I pray Allah that never again may I see such a thing.

QUEER FIXES.

II.—TRAPPED IN A TANK.

By *WALTER ENGLAND.*

ILLUSTRATED BY G. P. CARRUTHERS.



IN the early part of the year 1918 the majority of the industries on the Pacific Coast were either at a standstill or straining their resources to multiply their output and get the Government war orders out on time, or as near the time as possible.

Foremost among the latter was the ship-building game, beyond doubt at that time the most important item in Uncle Sam's programme for victory. To the shipyards flocked thousands of men who, although competent enough in their own particular line, were totally unfamiliar with their new conditions and surroundings, and to this source could be traced most of the accidents that were constantly happening. Not that it mattered very much; we soon looked on them as part of the day's work, and the slogan "Carry on" was lived up to with a vengeance.

About this time I was working for the Schaw Batcher Shipyard of San Francisco, a new plant that was winning enough laurels for itself to attract the attention of certain German secret agents. These miscreants planned to launch the first boat with the help of a little dynamite, forgetting, however, to consult the manager, so this scheme happily never came off. The infernal machine they intended to use is now one of the yard's trophies—a reminder of the days when the game had a "kick" in it.

Between the inside skin and the actual bottom of the big freighters we were building there was a space of about three feet, known as the "double bottom." This space, running the length and breadth of the vessel, was divided into eight or ten tanks, for the purpose of storing oil, fresh water, and ballast, according to the location. Each tank in turn was sub-divided into small compartments about two by six feet, communicating with each other by means of a small hole cut in the partition, just big enough for a man to crawl through. Access to each tank was obtained by means of a manhole cut in the tank-top.

If you were choosing your job these tanks were the very last places in the ship you would select to work in. Half stifled, cramped for space, and encumbered by heavy tools, the men down there did *not* enjoy themselves. Yet the work must be done, and done thoroughly, and the tanks properly finished off and made water-tight. Air-hoses and electric-light cords were usually the only indication that there were men at work in the double bottom, and they could only be found by laboriously tracing out their lines.

As an electrician on the boats under construction my job was to see that men working in the ship's interior were well supplied with lights, and that spare "extensions" were collected and returned to the supply box when they had finished with them. I had been ordered to go down to a certain tank and get it clear of lines. The last rivet had been driven and it was ready for the water-test.

Going below, I found half-a-dozen of my lines running into the manhole, whence they wandered off in all directions. In a short time I had them all out except one, which I discovered had been taken right down. I could only find the end of it; the rest was evidently tangled up somewhere in the maze of small compartments. I therefore took my flashlight and set out to find it.

Crawling through hole after hole, gathering the cord as I went, was a pretty slow job, and it was possibly half an hour before I gathered it together and turned my attention to getting out of that labyrinth of little steel chambers. It was not so easy as it sounds either, for I had neglected to leave a "tracer" line to lead me back to the manhole, and as all ways looked alike I could see I had a lot more crawling ahead of me.

I must have spent five or ten minutes trying to discover my proper direction, without any perceptible results, when I saw water crawling over the floor. There was no need for me to guess what had happened! Seeing that everything was apparently clear, they had started to fill the tank, so I knew I should have to get out pretty quick if I didn't want to drown by inches. But how?

I commenced wriggling as fast as I could in a direction I thought I had not tried previously. But, alas, more haste less speed! In my hurry I let the flashlight fall, broke its lamp, and left myself in total darkness!

My nerves, already strung to the breaking-point, seemed to snap, and my actions became more like those of a lunatic than a sane man. I beat madly on the walls of my prison with my broken flashlight, knowing the while that I had not one chance in a thousand of being heard in the din that was going on outside. I tried to make a noise with the heel of my boot, and I cursed everything and everybody—myself in particular. Finally, realizing the uselessness of it all, I started groping my way forward again, trusting that Providence would lead me right. And all the time the water was flowing steadily in, deepening every moment.

Goodness knows how long it was before my

clutching fingers found the oval over my head which was the manhole. Bolted down though it now was, and as solid as the rest, it was the way I should have to get out, if ever that was to happen.

By this time the water was up to my shoulders—I could not, of course, stand upright—and it seemed to my excited fancy that it was taking a personal interest in its job of torturing me. Like some living thing it crept up and up until I had to hold my head back to avoid swallowing it. Meanwhile, with a small chisel I had found in my pocket, I kept up a steady rat-a-tat-tat on the manhole cover. Why, I don't really know, for I never expected to be heard.

All the time I was thinking—thinking things I never thought before, the kind of thoughts, I imagine, that come to a man when he is being led to the gallows. I can only remember one now, that kept asserting its importance over all the rest—*How long will it be?*

I had heard that drowning was an easy death, so at last, in despair, I dropped my head below the water and waited, thinking I had found an easy way out of my troubles. But I found it was like choking oneself to death, and had to come to the surface again.

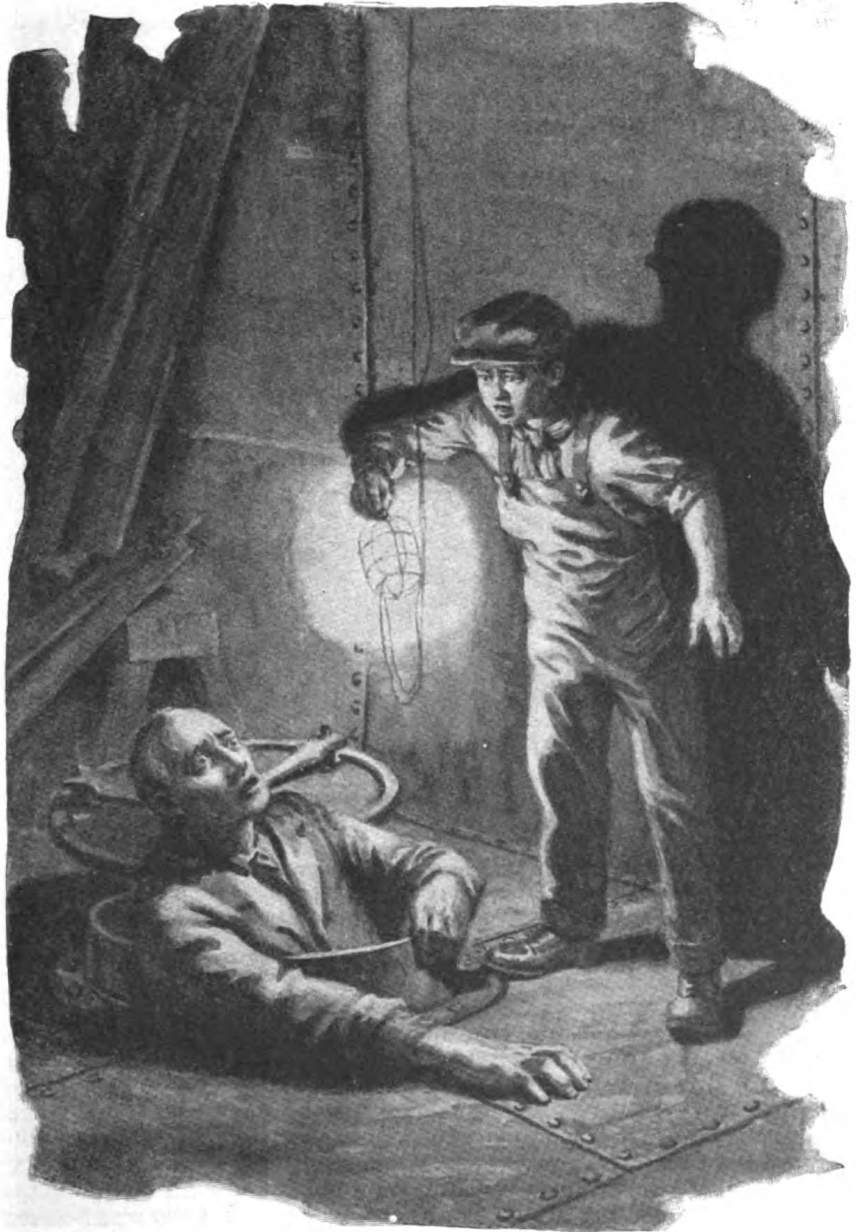
Torn by two impulses—the one to end it all, the other to fight while there was a ghost of a chance—I kept pressing my face against the top of the tank to keep my nose above water.

I never actually saw it happen, and I doubt if I was fully conscious when it *did* happen; it seemed too much of a dream. Suddenly it dawned on me that my nose was pressing the cover of the tank off, and I thought I saw a grimy heater-boy

looking down at me. As the fresh air rushed in and revived me I knew it was really true.

The boy had sneaked down below to have a smoke, and happening to sit on the lid of the manhole had *felt*—not heard—my knocking! Need I say that, despite his dirt and grease, he looked like an angel to me? He, in return, stared at me as if I were the devil emerging from his own domain.

I was told later that I looked like a submarine victim—expression and everything to match. Maybe I did. I know I *felt* like one as I crawled into a corner and waited for the whistle to blow, quite willing to call it a day.

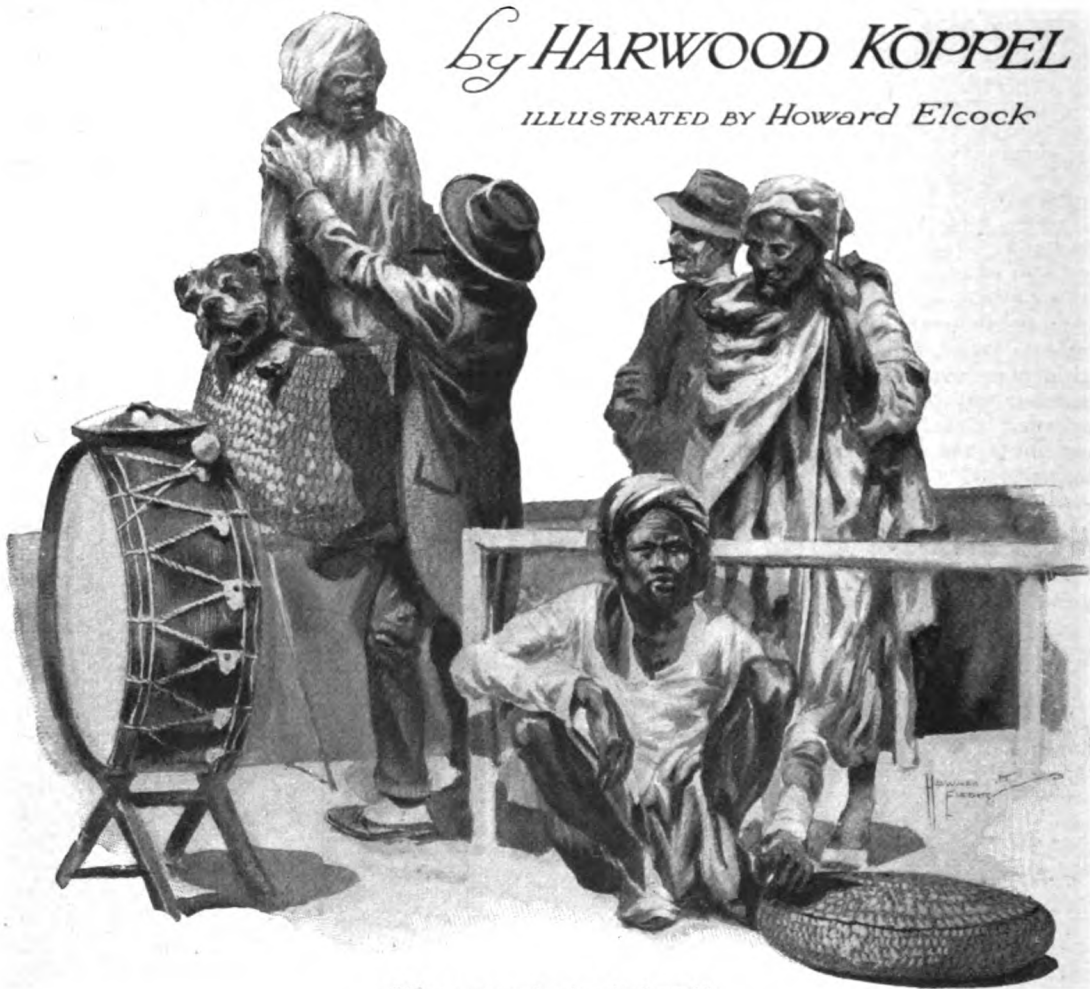


"He stared at me as if I were the devil emerging from his own domain."

The "HALF-MAN"

By HARWOOD KOPPEL

ILLUSTRATED BY Howard Elcock



"He was in truth only a 'half-man.'"

In his younger days the Author was a showman. This narrative describes his meeting with the queer little "freak" known as the "half-man," with his odd retinue and his beloved flute, and the strange tragedy that ensued.



HEY were a decidedly motley collection when I first set eyes on them—not that they were ever anything else but motley, but on that initial occasion, accustomed as I was to seeing unusual persons, they struck me as being unusually unusual, if one may be permitted to use the term. As a showman, I had seen many out-of-the-ordinary characters, but these four riveted my attention at once.

At the time when my acquaintance with them began I had been conducting a store

show during the winter months as an adjunct to my more pretentious enterprises, and I was badly in need of a strong attraction—or "freak," in show parlance—to bring in the golden harvest. The show was located in New Orleans, and, as it was fast approaching the great Mardi Gras season there, when all the Union comes to be entertained, it was highly important that I should secure at once an attraction of sufficient merit to corral the cash.

Perhaps I should explain, before proceeding further, that I did not at first see four of

them, but only three. The fourth appeared later, and the manner of his appearance was both startling and unexpected.

Leading the party was a white man, obviously an American, of the typical showman type. His features were hawkish in the extreme, and his nose a fine representative of the beak type. Atop his unkempt raven locks was a black slouch hat of no particular style, while his coat was of the cutaway type, trimmed with black braid at seams and pockets, collar and lapels. His trousers were of a lighter hue and striped, while his shoes were of a vivid yellow, surmounted with light blue spats. He carried a cane and was puffing at a "stogie," much the worse for having been in his pocket until he decided to fetch it out to smoke in the endeavour to make an impression on me by his appearance of prosperity.

Even had I been ignorant of the tricks of the profession, the appearance of his two Hindu companions would have belied his own bluff, for they were gorgeously clad in rags that had once been robes. The first was a tall, chocolate-coloured man, who carried himself like a prince. The second was apparently a servant, and bore on his shoulder a large basket made of woven grass.

My manager having barred their approach and ascertained the nature of their business—which, they explained, was to secure a contract for the "greatest freak on earth"—I waved to them to approach. I had so often heard of the "greatest freak on earth" that I was not at all excited over the appearance of my visitors. About every other manager of a "freak" in the show business thinks he has the "greatest," and a large percentage of these managers really believe that their "freaks" are what they represent them to be.

The American did the talking, though it transpired that both Hindus spoke English fluently. He said that he was the manager of Randion, an armless and legless Hindu who had been born in that state and, never having known the use of limbs, was as happy as the average fully-developed person, and much happier than the man who, born with two arms and two legs, had later in life lost one of these members.

Randion, he said, had learned to do most things for himself by the use of his lips, teeth, and shoulders. He would entertain my audiences with his accomplishments and talk to them in faultless English about himself and his condition.

As I was somewhat sceptical—he had apparently anticipated that I should be—he declared he had brought the "freak" along and would demonstrate the abilities of his marvellous prodigy.

I looked round inquiringly, and Basich—

which was the manager's name—smiled and nodded to the servant of the party. This man placed his big basket on our stand, where my "barkers" stood to call out the merits of the show to the crowds, and, whisking a cloth from the top of the container, lifted out the trunk and head of a live Hindu. One could hardly call him a man, for he was in truth, as his manager asserted, only a "half-man." He was not repulsive, for he was perfectly proportioned, and his trunk was entirely covered with a small bag-like garment that revealed only a thick neck and smiling head, with very intelligent eyes.

As the servant carefully set him down on the "ballyhoo" stand, a huge bulldog, almost as big as the man, it seemed, jumped from the basket, where he had been nesting with his master, and began licking the face of the armless and legless one.

Undoubtedly Randion was a good attraction, and it did not take us long to conclude a bargain and sign a contract for his appearance until after the conclusion of the Mardi Gras.

Other property they also possessed, not the least valuable of which from a showman's point of view was Poolah, a deadly Indian cobra, with its poison-fangs intact; which Basich used to attract the attention of the passers-by and to hold them spellbound while he "lectured" on the virtues of his prodigy.

Among the accomplishments of Randion, and one of his favourite pleasures, was playing on a flute of reed. He possessed the power of charming his cobra by his musical talent, and often, while he was on exhibition at my place, I watched him make the snake bend to his will. The reptile would extend itself on the latter half of its body and, with head erect, sway to and fro as Randion indicated by the notes from his flute.

Randion had been on exhibition for some time and was drawing well, so that I was even indulgent to Abdool, his brother, who was apt to take upon himself the airs of a potentate, ordering Ramleh, the servant, to wash and groom Randion in much the same way as one would address a dog. The appearance of both the brother and the servant had improved somewhat with the better condition of their finances, but they were not permitted to wax rich, as Randion was shrewd enough to manage his own affairs, and the bulk of the money I paid him went into a little bag that he kept tied around his neck. To Basich, the American, he paid a salary; his brother and the servant seemed to subsist mainly on his generosity.

It was one of those unusually warm days that occur so frequently in midwinter in New Orleans, and the crowd had been rather

slim during the morning hours, preferring to stay outdoors, where it was a bit cooler.

Basich was just winding up the final "spiel" before we closed for luncheon.

"Remember, ladies and gentlemen," he was saying, "he was born without arms and legs, yet he plays on the flute and charms this deadly Indian cobra," and Basich gave the snake, which he was holding firmly behind the head to prevent it biting him, a shake and dropped it with a thud into its box, whereupon the watchful Ramleh clapped down the cover.

"That cobra," continued Basich, "has a record of having already caused the deaths of at least two men—attendants of Randion—and several dogs, the pets of the armless and legless one. Yet Randion fears it not, and when it is placed before him he uses as his only weapon a little reed flute. How many of you would fight that deadly snake with a little reed flute? Not many, I dare say, and I will confess that I would not. Randion is truly the marvel of the age. He rolls, lights, and smokes a cigarette without assistance, sews, plays marbles, and, finally, shaves himself—all by the use of his lips and his shoulders alone!"

But it was too close to the noon hour, and the people who had stopped to gape when Basich held aloft the cobra began to dwindle away. As it appeared that there would be no chance of further business during the forenoon, my manager gave the signal to close up for luncheon. Abdool, who sold the tickets, in order that his brother might be assured of a fair count, since his contract called for a percentage of the receipts, swept the loose change from the ticket-box into a tray and carried it behind the heavy red curtain that separated the vestibule from the interior of the converted store building where Randion went through his performance. After counting it before the eyes of Randion, it was duly placed in the little bag and the bag in turn put under the pillow on which the limbless Hindu lay.

The big, rolling eyes of Randion watched the operation closely to see that his brother did not rob him, and when the count was finished he worked himself into a position of more comfort and stated that while they were out for luncheon he would sleep, but first he would play a few tunes on his flute. Ramleh placed the flute where Randion could secure it, and then Basich, followed by the brother and the servant, left the building. My people had also departed, but I tarried a moment longer to study my strange performer a bit more closely.

He was a queer sight, this "half-man," as the showman termed him. Born more than forty years before, when he first saw the light of day there had been no sign of arms

or legs attached to his baby trunk, nor had he grown even the slightest bit of them since. The smooth, dark-brown trunk was usually covered by a loose cotton dress, which from all appearances might have been a meal-sack with a hole cut in the bottom for his head to protrude through. His lips were thick and his eyes large and continually rolling in their sockets. His nose was very flat, his cheeks full and seamed with deep wrinkles, and his hair was jet-black and kinky.

Randion had been several years in America and had in that time travelled from one end of the country to the other, showing "under canvas" with various carnival companies and circus side-shows. He had acquired, to a certain degree, some American tastes, one of these being the desire to own a showy bulldog with a fighting record. Now, as the others went through the doorway, the Hindu whistled shrilly for a moment before turning to his flute. He was instantly rewarded by a patter of feet, and a second later a wet nose was pressed against his cheek and Billy, the bulldog, was rubbing his body against the kinky head of the Hindu. It was at this juncture that I, too, departed, and of the events that followed I learned subsequently.

After playing some soft, weird melodies on his flute, Randion finally dropped off to sleep, while Billy started off to finish the tour of investigation on which he had been engaged when his master's whistle summoned him to his side. Behind the store-room which was used for the show was a large courtyard, and in the high grass with which it was covered Billy was soon nosing around. Inside, Randion, with dreams of constantly-increasing wealth and fame in the realms of showdom flitting through his brain, slept on undisturbed.

Slowly but surely events were shaping themselves, however, for over towards the front of the building, screened from Randion's view, even had he been awake, by the thick red curtain, a small, brightly-coloured head, with wide inflated jaws protruded itself from the box on the "ballyhoo" stand, slowly pushing upward the light wooden cover which Ramleh had forgotten to fasten before leaving the building. Soon the long neck and body of Poolah, the cobra, was half-way out of the box and sliding gracefully over its top and side to the stand. From the stand to the floor was the distance of but a few feet, and the snake, having once got started, covered it in quicker time than it takes to tell. It hesitated for an instant as to which way to go, but finally decided to investigate behind the curtained-off part of the building.

As Poolah was gliding noiselessly past Randion, without any intention of attacking the Hindu, the latter was so unfortunate as

was too much for Poolah, and—half-frightened and half-defiant—she commenced to gradually glide nearer the supposed enemy, her head swaying from side to side, and emitting a sharp, piercing hiss from time to time.

Randion, just about to drop off to sleep again, had his first intimation of danger when the snake slid into his line of vision and, with tongue darting from side to side of her mouth, stopped but a few feet from him and glowered at him with her baleful little eyes shining with hate and fear.

At first the Hindu thought he was dreaming; then,



"Billy seized her twisting, squirming body between his strong, sharp teeth."

to emit a loud snore. The snake, frightened, stopped and turned, with a defiant hiss, to observe the supposed enemy.

As the sleeping man did not repeat the snore, the snake had almost decided to continue its journey, when the "limbless man" stirred uneasily, opened his eyes, yawned, and gave forth a low gurgling grunt. This

realizing that he was wideawake and gazing into deadly peril, he gave such a start that Poolah, frightened, made a sudden lunge at her intended victim. Fortunately for him, however, the distance was too great and she stopped short, coiling for another spring.

To move, Randion knew, would be fatal.

To lie there would be equally so, for it would be but a matter of moments before the snake, now watching him, would decide to strike. One touch of those deadly fangs, and all would be over for him.

"Oh! why was I not born like unto other men?" wailed Randion to himself. Now, for the first time, he felt keenly the lack of limbs.

The flute which he had been playing when he fell asleep was lying near his mouth, and while he feared the slightest movement on his part might precipitate an attack by the watching snake, yet he felt it might be his only hope of salvation. If he could secure the instrument he might be able to charm Poolah. The stub of a cigarette he had been smoking was also near his mouth, and he thought for an instant of attempting to light it, as he often did, by holding a match between his teeth and striking it on the scratch-pad at his head, the while the cigarette was placed conveniently by where he could ignite it with the match. If the snake did not attack, the tobacco smoke might keep it away, but a glance out of the corner of his eye showed him that Poolah was even then preparing herself to launch an onslaught.

He eventually decided that in the flute and his power to control Poolah by its soft, seductive notes lay his only chance of escaping death. It seemed hardly possible that he could accomplish this, but in the circumstances it was his only hope, and while he kept his gaze steadily fastened on the tiny, wicked eyes of the snake, he managed to get the flute between his lips and began to play.

The music came forth very low at first, for he did not wish to alarm Poolah, but it gradually increased in volume until the strains could be heard all over the building. Just how long he had been sleeping Randion had no means of knowing, so that he was unable to estimate when the others would return from luncheon. Their arrival, however, might not mean his rescue, for the snake, frightened by their coming, might decide that she had wasted enough time already, and strike without further delay.

"Oh, Mohammed, save your son Randion!" he pleaded while he played. "Thou didst cause him to be brought into the world without the limbs with which others, more fortunate, might protect their lives, and now he is in grave peril for the lack of them."

Presently, to his horror, he discovered that, while the snake was swaying from side to side in time with the music, she was also gliding slowly towards him. True, she was

moving but the smallest perceptible part of an inch each time, but he was so close that it would take but a few minutes for the cobra to get within striking distance of him.

This discovery nearly cost him his life. For the tiniest part of an instant he stopped his music, and Poolah, with her tongue darting from her mouth like streaks of forked lightning, gave forth a sharp, strident hiss that sent him back to his task without further delay.

He began to wonder how many minutes it would take the accursed reptile to cover the distance necessary to strike in, and realized that it could not be long. Finally, there seemed to be but the shadow of a minute remaining before the snake would be in a position to strike, for it became apparent from her course that she would inevitably come into line with the current of air pouring forth from his flute, and he knew that as soon as the snake felt the air strike her she would attack without further hesitation. Yet to stop playing was equally fatal.

Poor Randion gave himself up for lost, and was just wondering whether it would be worth while trying to avoid her fangs with a quick movement of his body when she struck, or whether he might just as well submit at first and get it over, when there was a sudden scurry of soft feet, and Billy, with a growl of rage and a catapulting spring, cleared his master's body and placed himself between the Hindu and certain death.

This sudden movement of the dog destroyed all Poolah's entrancement and also interrupted Randion's playing. Like a flash the snake darted her slim, rounded body through the air, aiming straight at the "half-man."

But Billy was in her path, and the hind leg of the dog received the puncture from the deadly fangs. But if the snake's bite was fatal to the dog, so also was its attack fatal to herself, for Billy, with a pedigree of many famous fighting ancestors behind him and a record of battles fought and won in his own lifetime, immediately seized her twisting, squirming body between his strong, sharp teeth, and tore her into shreds.

Randion, weakened with horror and fright, closed his eyes in momentary unconsciousness, while poor Billy stiffened out on the floor and Poolah quivered and writhed in her death-agony.

Later, when we returned, we found Randion with his head pillowed on Billy's dead body, praying fervently for Mohammed's favour for the faithful dog that had given his life to save his master.

The ISLES of ARAN



Peat boats at
the quay.

by
C. Chichester

On the west coast of Ireland, at the mouth of Galway Bay, lie the Aran Islands—as little known to the average Britisher as the Sahara Desert. These islands are inhabited by a very interesting community, and they contain some of the most remarkable prehistoric ruins extant. Here is a chatty description of a visit to the principal island, illustrated with striking photographs.



THE islands of Aran lie on the west coast of Ireland, twenty-nine miles from Galway harbour, and stretched across the entrance to the bay, forming a natural breakwater against

the wild Atlantic.

They were known a thousand years ago, and are still believed by many of the peasantry to be the nearest land to the phantom island of Hy-Brasail or O Brazil, the blessed paradise of the pagan Irish.

There is no other part of Ireland so interesting as these Aran Islands. They are remarkable not only for their past history and the great number of pagan and early Christian remains that are still to be found on their shores, but owing

to the curious manners and customs of the simple islanders.

In each of the three islands can be seen monuments of a great prehistoric people, whose works, even in their ruin, will outlive those of

later and more civilized nations. No doubt these islands were in ancient times the stronghold of a warrior race, who preferred the freedom of the barren crags to serfdom in the more fertile lands of the interior.

I spent ten days last summer on Inishmore, called the "Great Island," and the most important of the group; it is nine miles long and one and a half miles broad. During my stay I visited all the points of interest, and also got



One of the numerous ruined churches. This particular church is believed to date from the sixth century.



Outside the post-office.

a slight insight into the life of the people.

Three times a week a little steamer comes over from Galway and stops at the different islands to take up or put down passengers, goods, and the mails; on these days there is much stir in the busy little village of Kiltonan. The post-office, with its neatly-thatched roof, is full of anxious inquirers; and outside, sitting on the wall, are the politicians—every Irishman is a politician—some discussing the latest news from the mainland, others engaged in the more frivolous game of pitch-and-toss!

In the middle of them all is to be seen Antony O'Flaherty, of Gurtua Copple, driving, with some difficulty, his three little "bonums," which he has bought at the Galway fair. They also seem to have much to discuss, but Antony shows no consideration, and in spite of their grunts keeps prodding them with his stick; he has four

weary miles to walk before he can reach his ancestral home.

The quays also present an animated appearance, people coming and going, and donkey-carts galore bringing down goods to the boat or taking them away.

I also had to be moving on, but in an opposite direction, over fields of rock and innumerable loose stone walls, until I reached the south-west coast of the islands. There, built on the edge of the cliffs, almost indiscernible amongst the prevailing stoniness, is the oldest stronghold in the



The exterior of Black Fort.



A "clochaun," or beehive hut.

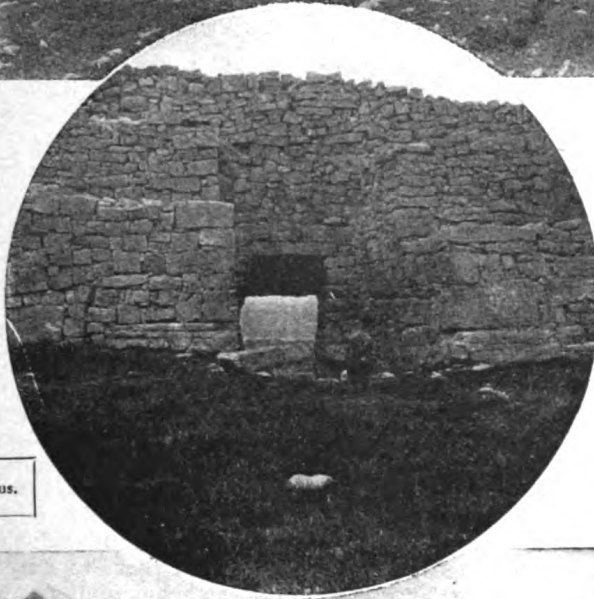
island—called Dubh Caher, or Black Fort. The walls are of rude masonry, twenty feet high and sixteen to eighteen feet thick. All round outside is a *chevaux de frise* of sharp stones, which served as an extra means of defence on the land side. These stones are set on end, so close together that it is quite impossible for man or beast to make his way through them. Nothing more efficacious could have been devised to break the ranks of an advancing foe.

In the interior there are remains of "clochauns," or stone huts, usually circular, and of a beehive shape; one of the most perfect is Clochaun-na-Carraige, on the north side of Inishmore, near the sea. The entrance is very low, and I had some difficulty in getting into it; but once inside I could stand straight up, and found it measured nineteen feet by seven and a half and was eight feet high.

One of the first places visited by the tourist when he sets foot on Inishmore is the fort of Dun Ængus, which has been described as "the most mag-



The walls and stone chevaux-de-frise of Dun Ængus fort.



The doorway of Dun Ængus.



Weaving homespun flannel.

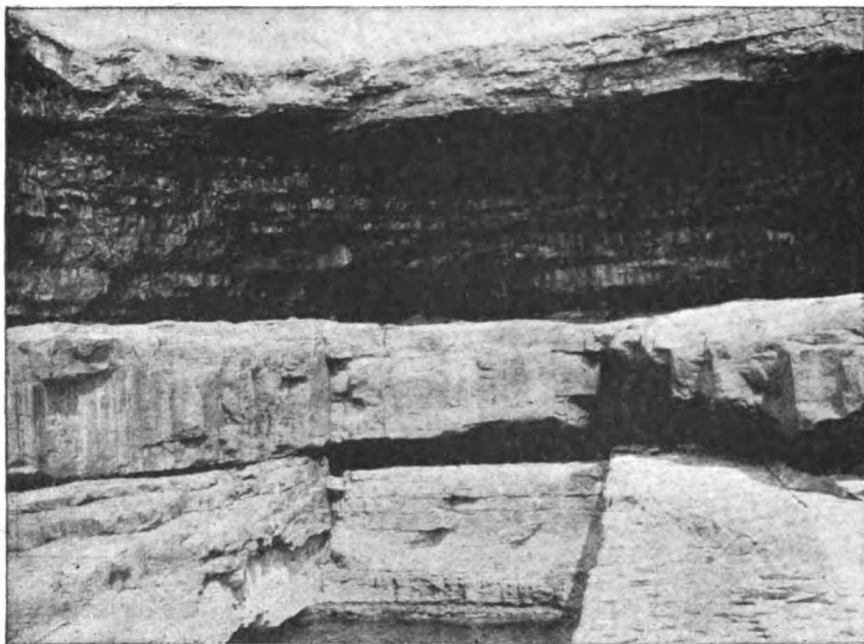
nificent barbaric monument now extant in Europe." Its gigantic proportions, isolated position, and the wild scenery by which it is surrounded render it well worth a visit.

It is built on the very edge of sheer cliffs two hundred and fifty to three hundred feet high, and is in the shape of a horseshoe, but is thought to have been originally oval and to have acquired its present form from the falling of the cliffs.

We continued our walk and eventually reached the "Worm Hole," below the cliffs—an eerie-looking place regarded with much fear by the inhabitants. Every ten years or so a sea-serpent is said to appear in it, and this always forebodes some evil to the island; the last time it appeared the potato crop failed. No one dares to go near the pool at night; and certainly it is somewhat terrifying to hear the waves as they roll, with a hollow, thundering sound, into the bowels of the rock.

Dun Ængus consists of three enclosures and the remains of a fourth. The wall which surrounds the innermost is eighteen feet high and twelve feet nine inches thick, and is built without cement of any kind. It is in three sections, the inner seven feet high. Outside the second wall is a rocky *chevaux de frise* thirty feet wide.

Dun Ængus is called after Ængus, son of



The sinister "Worm Hole," supposed to be inhabited by a monstrous sea-serpent.

Hua Mor, a famous chieftain in pre-Christian history.

The other two forts on Inishmore—Dun Eochla or Oghill Fort, which crowns the summit of the highest hill on the island, and Dun Onaght or Eoghanacht—are very similar, but smaller, have no *chevaux de frise*, and are both inland.

Certainly these early inhabitants of Aran had no difficulty in finding material for their cyclopean buildings. My first impression, on setting foot on the island, was that it consisted of stone and rock and very little else. "The soil is almost paved over with stones," says an early writer, "so that in some places nothing is to be seen but large stones with wide openings between them, where cattle break their legs." Over the entire surface there is no earth whatsoever save what has been artificially created, and for the most part this is but a few inches deep.

I have walked over "fields" consisting of nothing else but rock, with great fissures and interstices in the stratification; these are so narrow that it was with much difficulty I got my hand down to pick the maidenhair fern and other rare plants which grow

with great luxuriance in them.

I shall never forget a walk we had along the high cliffs beyond Dun Ængus, exposed to the tempestuous winds of the Atlantic, which blew us along helter-skelter over the rocky fields, every minute expecting to catch our feet in the fissures and break our legs. 'When the wind was extra hard, the only safeguard was to sit down on the rocks and wait for a lull in the storm! These rocks are often from forty to sixty feet long; in calm weather one might imagine one was

walking on a billiard-table, they are so smooth and level, and the people find them most serviceable when thrashing the corn, which is done in a very primitive manner. I have also seen them used as dancing floors with much effect.

One morning we were watching the women and children picking kelp on the shore, and after they had spread it out on the fields to dry, and were returning home to their dinner, we persuaded them to dance a jig for us. Biddy Durane required little pressing. The poor old woman had been working hard all the morning standing in the water, and was wet above her knees; but evidently her heart was still young, and the merry twinkle in her eye showed that she was keen for a little "diversion." Her wet petticoats did not damp her ardour, nor did the



A party of kelp-gatherers.

"pampooties" she was wearing interfere with the light measure she trod on that rocky surface. To the familiar strain of "Thump the pot-lid," sung by my friend, she took the floor. The Russian dancers were "not in it"! We sat around, some on the kelp baskets, some on the bare rock, lost in admiration at the agility and light-heartedness of this poor old woman.

The elegant shoes worn by the dancers are a sort of sandal, called "pampooties," made of raw cow-hide, with the hair on the outside, cut low at the sides, with a little pointed piece in front, just sufficient to cover the toes, and tied with a piece of string across the instep in more or less classical fashion. To prevent them getting hard they must be kept moist, and are damped before putting on. Owing to the difficulty of walking on the huge limestone flags, they are very generally worn by the Aranites, and no doubt account for that peculiarly shuffling but at the same time swinging step which we noticed in their walk.

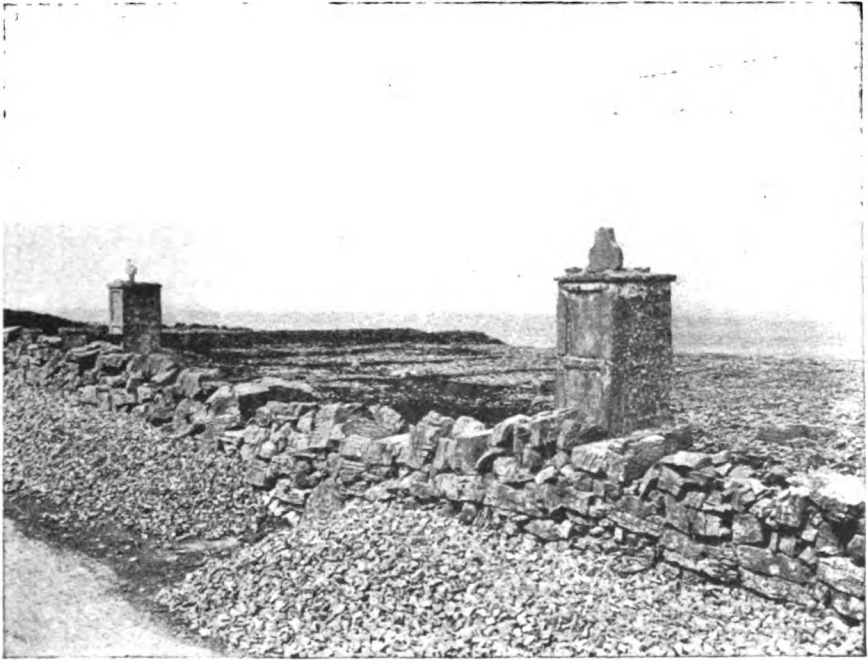
Their clothes are mostly home-made, and of yellowish flannel, spun, woven, and bleached on the island. The men, as a rule, wear no coats, even in their Sunday attire; their sleeves are of the same yellowish-white flannel, and probably

part of the shirt; over this is worn a "bawneen" or jersey of some dark blue knitted material; the trousers are of the homespun flannel. The boys, up to the age of ten or twelve, wear red petticoats, and look very comical.

The chief industries on the island are kelp-making and fishing. The seaweed is gathered when the tide is out, dried, and then burnt, and exported; it is used in the manufacture of iodine.

As to the fishing, there are plenty of fish, but the appliances for catching them are very primitive and inadequate. The little open boats, called "currachs," can only go out in good weather, and never very far from land. They are made of canvas and are very light. I went out in one, and found I had to sit very still or I should have upset it!

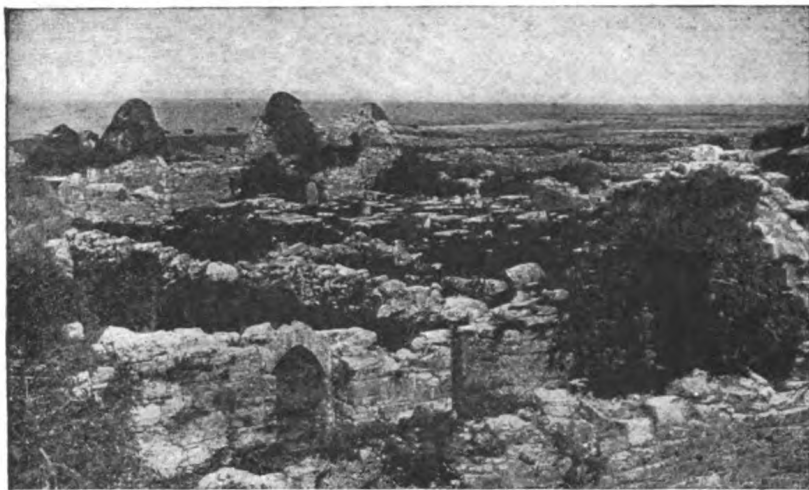
The turf hulks also come in here from Connemara, and the people bring their carts—the poorer ones their donkeys with panniers—to carry it away. The quay which has been built lately by the Congested Districts Board is generally piled up with turf. I watched it being thrown up sod by sod—a slow process; but why



Wayside monuments in memory of the departed.



One of the canvas boats of the islands



Ruins of the "Seven Churches."

hurry? Time is of little concern in these islands. We found a nice-looking old woman, Mary McDonough, sitting knitting under the shelter of the rock, waiting for her boat to come in; she had to be there on the spot for fear, as she put it, that the turf "might be stolen on her."

With the exception of a few stunted trees round Kilmurvey there are none anywhere in the island, and there are no bogs, so they depend completely on Connemara for their supply of fuel. When I was there last August I heard that the Congested Districts Board were talking of stopping this supply, as the bogs were being cut away, and at the present rate there would soon be none left. Only those who have been in Aran can realize the dreary, dreary outlook on the cold raw winter days; the roaring sound of the wild Atlantic against those high cliffs, the plaintive cry of the curlew, intermingled with the howling of the wind; and over all a sort of grey cloud hanging, uniting sky, sea, and rocks in one.

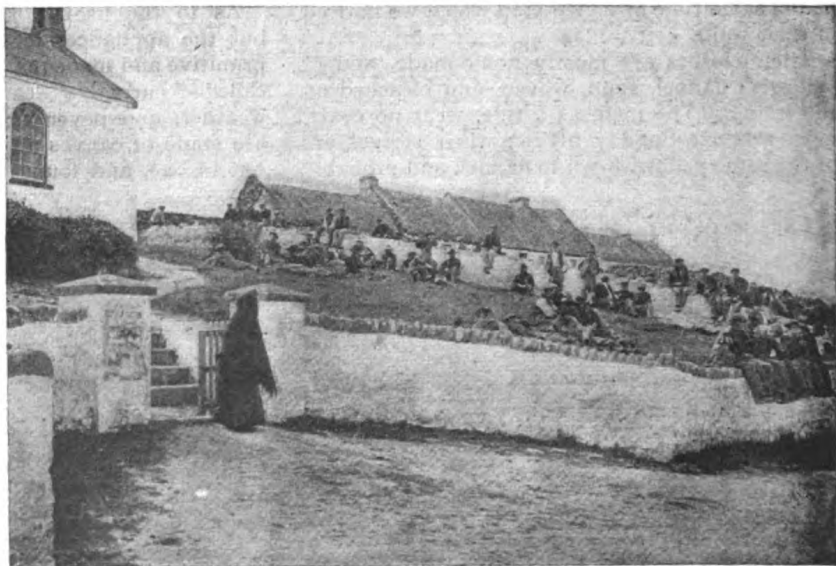
What the poor people will do should the turf supply be stopped I cannot imagine. It is out of the question getting coal from Galway,

owing to the expense; and in any case it would not be suitable for burning on their hearths.

The one bright spot in their lives is the turf fire, round which they gather on those cold winter evenings, telling stories in their own native tongue, or discussing the affairs of their poor little island, which is all the world to them.

Prominent features of Inishmore are the curious stone pillars erected in different places along the road-

side. As I was walking from Kilmurvey to Kilonan I came across several at a short distance from each other, with rude crosses over them; at first I thought they were tombs, but on closer inspection I read the inscription, and found it was merely a request for prayers for the souls of the persons they commemorate. They are erected at the places where the coffin rested on its way to the cemetery. I stopped a few minutes and watched a native coming along in his picturesque archaic clothes; as he reached the stone he raised his hat. With a short "God rest his soul" he passed on, and the wind from the West echoed his prayer.



Waiting outside the church on Sunday morning.

TRAPPED BY KWANGSI BANDITS



CHARLES A
JAMIESON
of HINGI, KWEIFCHOW,
CHINA

ILLUSTRATED BY
FRANK GILLET & Co.

THE traveller's greatest enemy on the road from the Kweichow province of China to Poseh, in Kwangsi, a city on the main route to Canton, is not the heat, nor the wretched apologies for inns, but the brigands who lurk in the long rank reeds which skirt the narrow clay tracks that pass for roads. Along these roads every day in the year journey processions of horses or men carrying goods from the coast ports to inland centres, and taking back ores and skins. Along these same roads are perpetually committed deeds which, in any other country but China, would not be tolerated for a day by the authorities, but which are possible in this country owing to the corruptness or inertia of the Chinese officials. It is a notorious fact that at the present time the ten days' journey from Hingchi to Poseh can only be made at the risk of one's

"Brigandage," says the Author, "is the curse of China." In this story he describes the adventures of a young Chinese trader who was captured by outlaws and held to ransom, but finally succeeded in making his escape.

face the perils of those ten days most people prefer to go round the extra distance of about fifteen hundred miles to Shanghai, instead of going to Hong-Kong by the direct route. The robbers are the curse of the roads, and the reeds are their stronghold. Nothing will give the readers of THE WIDE WORLD MAGAZINE a more vivid idea of the condition of affairs than a plain matter-of-fact account of the experience that befell Woo So-gway, a young man who, like multitudes of others, risked the journey to Poseh to sell some goods and bring back a load of fancy-ware to resell in his native town.

He reached Poseh safely, and, in the fifth month of the Chinese year, began the return

life, on account of the freebooters who roam over the wild and trackless hills of the province of Kwangsi, defying the law and robbing its administrators. Rather than

journey to Kweichow in company with about a hundred others. To secure their safety they engaged six Chinese warriors, each dressed in a yellow calico uniform (a substitute for khaki) and each terribly and fearfully armed with an obsolete and rusty Mauser rifle, made in the seventeenth year of the reign of the notorious Wilhelm. A bandolier over the shoulder of each brave, or a belt strapped round the waist, carried the leaden rations of the ancient weapon. With this mighty protection the party set out hopefully and confidently for the province of Kweichow. The budget passed for the expenses for the armed escort was the sum of six dollars per man, which amounts to the sum of twelve to fifteen shillings, pre-war rates. For this sum the Chinese soldier undertakes to "protect" tradesmen on the road for a distance of two hundred miles, and eat no man's rice but his own. Except in the great and exciting times of war, when, with a terrific show of patriotism, the Chinese officers set out to slay their own countrymen—and incidentally get rich in the process—the Chinese soldier does very little else but act as an escort to tradesmen or to his own officers and their goods.

All went well for a few days, and the party to which Woo So-gway belonged went cheerfully on their way, resting at a straw-covered hovel each night, and starting off again each morning at daybreak. Their dreams were of profit; their talk of the things they had purchased, and the price of food at the various inns. After they had travelled for three days, however, the conversation began to change, and a silence fell upon the party at frequent intervals. Questions began to be asked: Was the road peaceful? Had anything occurred? Then, somehow or other, the story got out of the sack of Beh Lo Tseng. The dreaded Bang-keh, or "Trade-visitors," as the robbers were called, had agreed to sell all their stocks of opium to a certain Mr. Wang, who lived there, at a figure well below the market rate of the drug, in order to induce him to buy the more readily. Then they fell on his house at night, just after his evening meal, and robbed him of the opium and everything else they could lay their hands on. When asked why they took the trouble to sell him the opium when they fully intended to relieve him of it again, they coolly stated that, if they had simply attacked his house, he would have his wealth secreted where he alone could find it, and they would not know where to dig for it. Accordingly they sold the opium to him to get his silver, and then fell upon him before he could get the opium stowed away. Thus they made certain of both silver and drug.

To anyone versed in affairs Chinese it is a

self-evident principle that when conversations such as this begin to get prominent something untoward is in the air, for the people have a proverb which runs, "Talk of Tsao-tsao and he is sure to come," which is our equivalent of "Talk of the devil—"

About midday Woo So-gway and his friends were passing silently along a narrow defile between two high walls of reeds on either side of the road. The six valiant warriors were walking along in front, with their rifles slung on their backs. This is a most unfortunate habit with Chinese soldiers. They never have their weapons ready for use, and in an emergency they get them off their shoulders far too late to be of any service.

The small-talk of the party had flagged, and an ominous silence had fallen over the company. The men trudged along in a thoughtful quietude, and the pack-horses walked with drooping heads. Suddenly a roar burst from both sides of the road simultaneously, and a flash, accompanied by a cloud of smoke, broke from the deadly weeds. All the six soldiers in the vanguard were enveloped in the cloud, and when the smoke at length drifted upwards six bleeding forms in yellow calico were stretched at length on the narrow track. The work of the escort was done; they would carry arms no more! Then, before the stunned and astonished party could collect its scattered senses, and long before anybody had considered moving, a dozen forms in dirty, ragged uniforms sprang from the high rank grass, and, with a promptness born of frequent practice, whipped the six Mausers and the ammunition off the dead bodies of the prostrate men and appropriated them to their own use. When they had done this they turned leisurely to survey their work, and see what kind of prey had fallen into the fowler's snare. But the prey had, by this time, come to its senses. With one accord it turned to flee. What was the astonishment of the party, however, to find themselves taken in rear by a still larger party of unkempt beings, in ragged soldiers' uniforms. These seemed to have sprung from nowhere, and stood apparently unconcerned, calmly blocking the backward way of escape. Some of them were leaning on their rifles; while others, after their long wait in the grass, had taken out their tobacco-pipes, and were occupied in rolling up the leafy weed to have a smoke. What was to be done? A sudden desire filled some of the party to fling themselves into the grass on either side of the road, and make an attempt to disappear up the slopes of the mighty hills. But the reeds are not the friends of honest men; they are part and parcel of the outfit of the robbers. Voices began to be heard on both sides of the road,

proceeding from the heart of the grass, and the black-glint of old rifles and muskets was occasionally seen. This chilled the desire of most of the party to seek that avenue of escape, but one or two of the bolder spirits made a dash for it and secreted themselves in a rocky cave in the tall reeds. To everyone's astonishment, the robbers took not the slightest notice of these few.

At this juncture a figure stepped out of the grass on to the track. He was well dressed, and bore no arms, and white hairs crowned his temples. With eyes mild but piercing he surveyed the group of merchants, and at the sight of him the robbers became animated. With the most amazing celerity they set to work to strip the party of its possessions. The road became a scene of the most lively activity. Clothes were ripped off and flung into heaps; articles of personal use, such as watches and armlets, were appropriated without even a glance. Money was extracted from pouches and the secret receptacles in which it had been hidden, as if the man who took it from its owner had been his *valet de chambre*. Nothing seemed to offer any difficulties to the freebooters; they appeared to know just where everything was, and where to look for it. Boxes were broken open with great speed; and packs were torn off the horses and opened up with business-like rapidity. More and still more of the rovers came from the grass and set to work. In a very short time all that was left to the party was not worth the price of the evening meal which they had now no money to pay for.

All this time the man with the whitened hair stood still on the side of the road. He seemed to take no interest in anything, and did not lift his hand to assist in the looting. Not a word was spoken. Almost all the goods and articles were thrown into heaps on the road, and it looked as if there was no intention of taking them away.

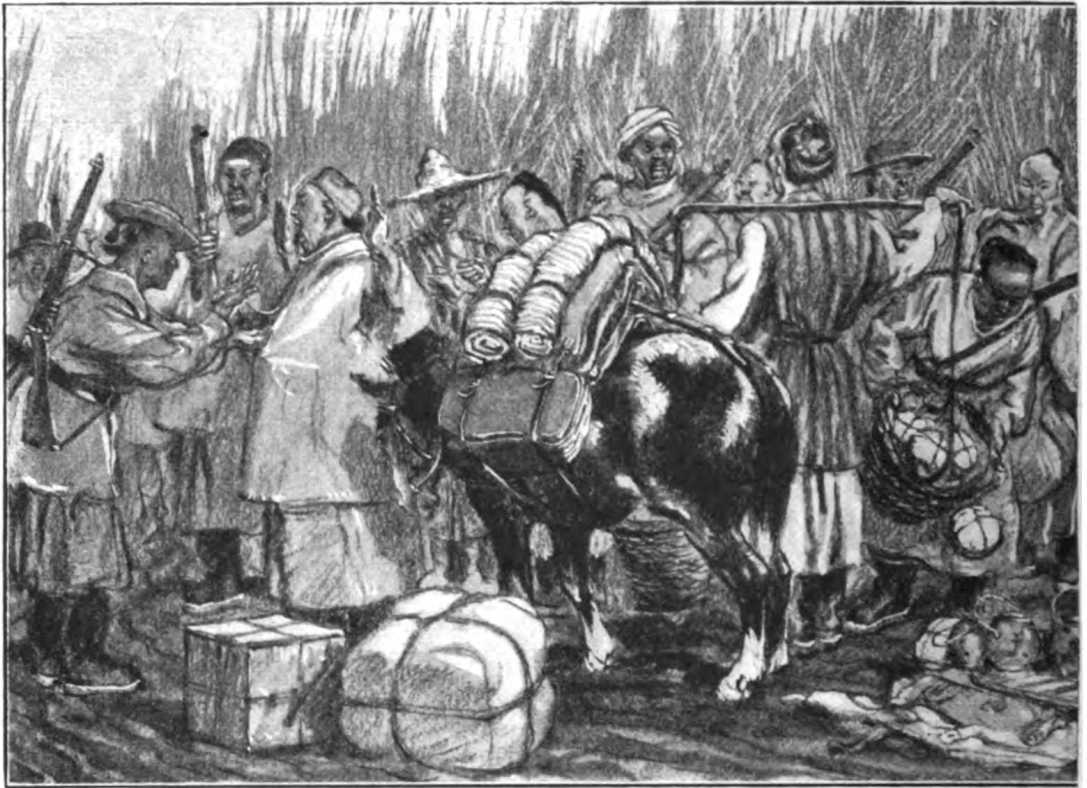
At last the brigands came to where Woo So-gway was standing beside the load which he had been carrying, and without a word relieved him of the silk vest that he had swung over his otherwise naked shoulders. Then they looked at his boxes and passed on. A sudden hope sprang into his breast that, for some reason, they would leave him his boxes.

But that was not their intention at all. It was only that they noticed that his boxes were well made and well stowed, and that they would not need to be repacked for travelling. When all was ready, and the erstwhile well-equipped party had been reduced to the appearance of so many ill-clad scarecrows, some of the bandits turned their attention to those who had fled into the grass: "Now, you in the cave, there," they

called; "are you coming out, or do you want a shower of bullets to help you? If you don't make your appearance on the instant we'll roast you where you are."

The significance of this latter threat was well understood by those in hiding. The grass was dry and thick, and if it were set on fire the flames would spread at a terrific rate, and their fate would be sealed. Seeing that they had only been living for the time in a fool's paradise, the two or three would-be escapees came ruefully out again, and were quickly and roughly divested of all they possessed. For a moment there was silence again; then there arose a sudden cry of "Tseo, tseo" ("Let us be off"), and a rush was made towards the heaps of things lying on the track. These were quickly flung over the backs of the horses and on to the shoulders of the men themselves. A robber came to pick up the carrying-pole of the load which belonged to Woo, and prepared to place it on his shoulders. Then the man at the side of the road spoke for the first time, in a voice of authority which none thought of disobeying. "Let him take it himself," he said, laconically. Woo heard the remark, but for a moment he did not comprehend the meaning of it. Not so the ill-clad figure at his side. "Pick up your load and follow us," he said, in a dialect which Woo could scarcely understand. Then the truth dawned on Woo So-gway. He was to be held to ransom! With a sinking heart he put the load on his shoulder, and followed the ruffian into the grass. In an instant the whole party was immersed in the wilderness of reeds, making their way up the hill, and the last glimpse Woo had of his companions showed a disconsolate and unkempt band standing half-naked on the yellow track, neither moving nor speaking. Very soon, however, he had too many cares of his own to worry about them any more.

The men who had trapped him moved with great speed, for they are used to making journeys of sixty and seventy miles during a day and half a night, with only a few short rests by the wayside. Woo So-gway was a Kweichow man and the heat of the Kwangsi weather made it very difficult for him to keep up with the party. Still, he knew he dare not flag; that would mean a prick with a knife or a bayonet. But Woo So-gway, though only twenty-one, was a tactful youth, and he answered all questions with the utmost assumed cheerfulness, and was ready to strain every nerve to keep up with the marauders on their journey. They climbed steadily up the trackless hill, and towards nightfall arrived at a Chung-chia village away down the other side of the mountain. The people of this village received them with apparent rejoicing, and made every



"All this time the man with the whitened hair stood still on the side of the road. He

preparation for their comfort for the night. The robbers treated the villagers with every consideration. They could have taken all they desired, if they wished, and paid nothing for it; but they are too clever to do that. If they did they would frighten the villagers into the hills, and these latter would rather burn their houses than have them robbed; so the robbers pay for all they want, preferring to be on friendly terms with the tribesmen.

When they arrived the first night they called for spirits, and asked the headman to kill a pig, for which they promised to pay in full. Woo soon learned that this was the regular custom. The goods they had stolen were all placed in a heap in one room of the house, and the party set to work to get the evening meal ready. Rice was boiled and steamed, meat roasted, and sufficient food prepared to feed sixty men. This was the number of the robbers, Woo learned.

When the party had feasted, the man with the silver locks said: "Now, secretary!" and turned to a gentlemanly-looking member of the party who sat at his table. This individual then rose, took a pen and sepia, and began to rub the sepia on a moistened slate slab. This done, all the robbers crowded into and round the door of the room; and the secretary took an inventory of the goods they had acquired at the expense of Woo's party. Woo took a sad interest in this

performance, especially when his own goods came up for listing and valuation. When, far into the night, the estimate was completed, a division of the spoil was made, each man getting a share. When the share-out was finished the chief called Woo into his presence.

"Now," he said, "I want to talk to you. You are to be held here till you send word to your people to produce a sum of money for your release. You may consider yourself a prisoner till the money appears."

"That would be very well, Great Man," replied Woo, "but where shall I find any people to take an interest in me? When I was in my teens I was a young rascal, and took to gambling, and my father turned me off and refused to allow me to return home again." He lied glibly, but the old man was not impressed.

"Ha, ha!" he laughed. "You think to deceive me, do you, young man, but I was not born yesterday. It is not likely that a youth as well dressed as you are, and with all these silks in your load, has no people to account for him. Go along with you! You send for the money, and drop all this talk."

"Those silks the Great Man refers to," answered Woo, without moving a muscle, "were not mine, but belonged to the man for whom I was carrying the load."

"A most remarkable coincidence!" remarked the chief, sarcastically. "There



seemed to take no interest in anything, and did not lift his hand to assist in the looting."

were a round hundred of you in that band, every man carrying his own possessions, and you ask me to believe that I struck the only man in the hundred who was a coolie—and in such clothes?"

"As a matter of fact," said Woo, parrying this awkward remark, "you have treated me so handsomely that I have decided to make application to you to join your band and follow you. I have no people and am entirely alone. If you will permit me to enter your fraternity I shall endeavour to serve you well."

"That would scarcely do, young man," replied the robber. "You are young, and you will do very well to follow your own trade; you will get on very nicely at buying and selling."

Although this was said in the suavest of tones and with an angelic smile, yet Woo, being a Chinese, understood quite well that it was a peremptory intimation to cease conversation on those lines. He therefore took his departure and sought a resting-place among the men, who were by this time drinking and beginning to gamble over the spoils.

They greeted Woo with a volley of threats, telling him that he would have to produce his money in plenty, and very quickly, or he would lose his life. The chief, they said, was a merciless man, and would kill him out of hand.

With a fortitude born of discretion Woo suffered all their threats and insults, seeking only to keep on good terms with them.

The next day they were off at daylight, and rested again that night in another small village, which had cost them a heavy day's march to reach. Woo carried his own bundle with some other things which had fallen to the lot of one of the "brethren," and was not sorry to get to the resting-place. That night the men began their threats anew, and tried to cow him into a speedy effort to produce the money for his ransom. The chief sent for him again that night, and also broached the subject of the ransom. Woo told him that he was very poor and had no means of getting money, and requested the "Great Man" to let him off as lightly as possible.

"Well," replied the robber chief, "in consideration of your extreme poverty, I will let you down lightly and not ask you for a very large amount. We shall talk in very small figures indeed, and simply name the sum of five hundred taels." (At that time about £90 in English money.)

Woo gasped, but was too discreet to show it. That sum in China would build a very good house, buy enough rice-fields to keep a family of five in comfort for the rest of their days, or purchase about eighty head of cattle.

"It is very kind of the Great Man to let me down so lightly," he said, gratefully, "but even that small sum is to me a sheer impossibility. If the Great Man would look charitably on a gift of fifty taels, I would be pleased to do my utmost to have it sent along at once."

To this the chief made no reply, and Woo saw that his silence implied consent to take the amount named. In China, as elsewhere, a huge figure is generally mentioned to commence with, and the robber knew that a man of Woo's standing could never produce such a sum.

He then dismissed Woo, who returned to the "brethren." Some of these latter invited him to partake of Chinese spirits, which request he judged it better not to refuse. This was the second day of the sixth month of the Chinese calendar, and a small crescent moon appeared in the west for a short time. This set Woo thinking.

The next few days passed in very much the same way—resting in a native village every night after a long day's march. One evening Woo was conversing with the chief, with whom by this time he was very friendly, and remarked to him:—

"After I return home again I shall be passing down to Poseh in future, trading, and I would very much like to pick out a piece of the best silk, to present to you, seeing you have been so good to me. But I am ignorant of your name and address, and should not know to whom to present it."

"Oh," answered the chief, "that's easy. Just ask Wang Lao-ye, of Beh Lo Tseng, where the 'trade visitors' of Loo are, and he will let you know."

"Ha!" thought Woo, inwardly, "so your name is Loo, and you are under the guidance of Mr. Wang, who acts as your informer and patron."

Aloud, he said: "Very good. I shall be pleased to find you a handsome present."

On the sixth night they were resting again in a village, and the "brethren" were more boisterous than usual. Woo had been talking to the chief, who expressed his contempt for the soldiers of the officials. "I took to the road when I was twenty-two years of age," he said, "and am now over sixty. They have no terrors for me, and I ignore them."

When Woo So-gway left the presence of the chief to take up his station among the "brethren," who by this time had become decidedly uproarious, he noticed uneasily that the moon was hanging brightly in the summer sky. "It's getting too far into the month," he muttered. "I must do something."

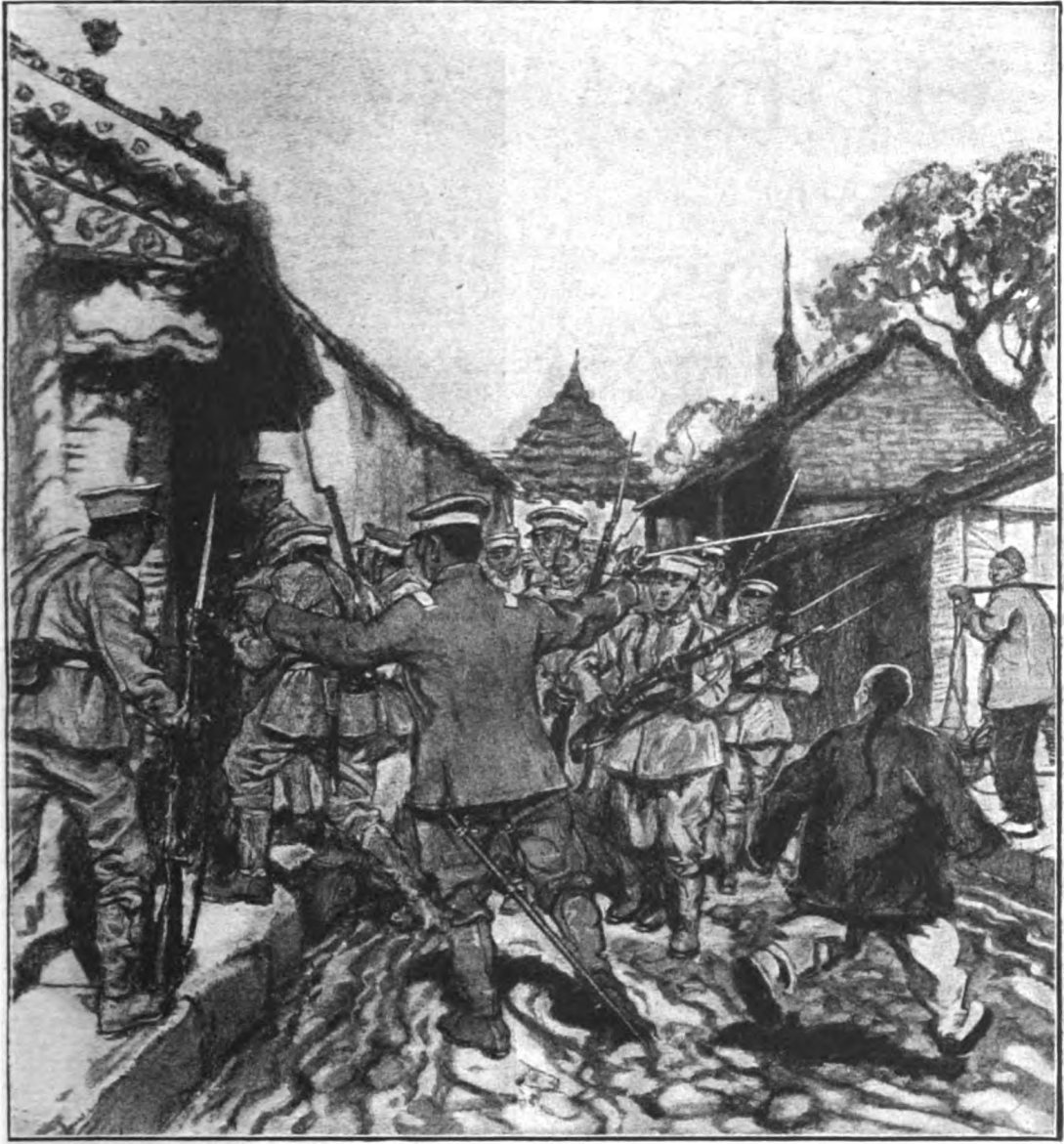
In a very short time the robbers' carouse came to an end, and, between the spirits, the heat, and the thirty miles they had walked that day, they began, one by one, to

fall off their stools in a heavy sleep. Finally a general signal was given to retire, and Woo, from the inner darkness of the room, soon noticed that the ruffian who had been left on guard at the door had fallen into a noisy and profound slumber. The young moon had disappeared over the hills, and it was pitch-dark. There remained only the village dogs, but Woo thought that he would risk their attentions, and stealthily rose from his couch of earth and made for the door. It was a desperate thing to do. Had a dog barked, a horse neighed, or a water-buffalo greeted him with its childlike cry, instant death would have been the result. Slowly he made towards the door, and, stepping over the prostrate form of the snoring robber, laid hold on the great bar which closes most Chinese doors. The door swung in two wooden sockets, one above and one below, and these always make a horrible creaking when one does not desire them to. But Woo had to risk it. He lifted up the bolt and, as quietly as possible, opened one of the two leaves of the door, stepped over the high doorstep, and was outside in the midst of the wilds of Kwangsi.

Quietly he drew the door to after him and strode forth alone into the night. For a short space a horrible fear possessed him, for he was conscious that if one cur awoke and gave vent to its inquiring yelp, the whole canine fraternity of the village would yell in chorus. Making for the nearest break in the wall of houses, he slipped, stumbled, and felt his way in the darkness towards the open country.

How he passed that night, how he made his way back to the road over trackless hills—afraid of tigers, afraid of leopards, afraid of more "brethren," afraid of hunger—he himself can now scarcely tell. Whenever he begged for food at a house he was mistaken for a robber himself. It all seems like a ghostly dream to him, but finally, after many days of wandering, he struck the road and reached safety. Needless to say, the robber chieftain never received his present of expensive silks!

Woo So-gway was soon avenged for the loss of his goods. One day a young man, with a gun slung over his shoulder, was passing along the Poseh road, near a place called Hseih-dse Ai, when a shot came out of the reeds, and he fell a corpse on the road. The murderer emerged, took his gun and ammunition and all his belongings, and finally threw the corpse into the Redwater River. The young man was the nephew of Long Chi-kwang, one of the former leaders in the struggle between the North and the South and a Black Lolo chieftain by birth. This great man became irate beyond expression, and laid plans to sack Beh Lo Tseng and capture Wang Lao-ye and his brethren,



"The soldiers rushed down the street and attacked the shop from the front."

who were believed to have committed the crime. Late one afternoon he sent a company of soldiers from Poseh, who did not go by the road, but crept along through the grass. By a forced march they reached the village just as Wang and his brethren were at tea. An insignificant-looking man in civilian clothes walked down the street of the village, glanced into the shop kept by the Wangs as he was passing, and saw that the family was all at tea. It is said that this family could command over a hundred ruffians in the village itself at a moment's notice, and they had forty firearms in the house. But one does not carry muskets and rifles when at food. Suddenly the stranger produced a stick of lighted incense from under his gown, and lit a huge fire-cracker with it.

At the sound of the explosion of the cracker a roar was heard from the end of the village, and a volley was fired into Wang's house from the back. At the same time the soldiers rushed down the street and attacked the shop from the front.

The surprise was perfect. One of the Wangs fled out at the back of the house and made for the grassy hillside, but was promptly shot dead by the men at the rear of the house. The remaining three brothers were captured and taken to Poseh, and the house was confiscated with all its contents. Two of the brothers were later executed, and the third fined eight thousand taels—to a Chinese almost as bad as death. This cleared the road of outlaws for the time being, but they remain China's greatest curse.

ODDS AND ENDS.

A "Pencil-Clock"—Tame Trout—Curious Sabots.



PARIS is a city of curious clocks. Here is one of the most original, forming the sign-board of a pencil manufacturer, who aimed, as the map of the world in the centre shows, at conquering the markets of the universe. Whether he has succeeded may be left to the judgment of our readers. Anyway, his clock keeps good time, despite



A curious "pencil-clock" in Paris.

its square face and necessarily rectangular arrangement of the hours, which, as will be seen from our photograph, are formed by pencils arranged as Roman numerals. This clock is to be seen on one of the main boulevards, high above the heads of foot passengers, and has been constructed on a very big scale so as to be clearly visible from the street.

If C. W. Lange, of Port Townsend, Washington, has much more success with his trained trout, he will likely quit his business and take them with a circus



Mr. Lange, of Washington, has trained some tame trout to jump through hoops and do other tricks.

At feeding time there is usually a crowd around the basin in which Lange keeps the fish, for on these occasions he puts them through a series of remarkable stunts. They leap clear out of the water to seize the food he holds up for them, and even jump through a hoop, as shown in our photograph. These trout are eighteen inches in length and weigh over four pounds each.

We reproduce here a picture showing the quaint wooden shoes or "sabots" worn by the mountaineers of the province of Santander, Spain, which have queer



Not exactly suitable for dancing! The remarkable "sabots" worn by the mountaineers of Santander, Spain.

knobs underneath that elevate the soles from the ground. Although rather cumbersome-looking, the men seem to stand with comparative ease, but it must be rather unpleasant for the wearer of ordinary boots if a mountaineer treads on his corns!

OCEAN TRAMPS

by *Roger Pocock*

Illustrated by
W E Wigfull



Our street traffic the tramcar plies on a dull route, making

the same journey over and over again, while the gay taxi flits about the town, and never knows, or cares, where she will go to next. So, in the sea lanes, our planetary traffic to all the ends of the earth consists of dull liners, which ply on settled routes, and cheery tramps that neither know nor care where they are bound for, so long as they get a load.

The liner is a lady, fast, but quite respectable. She carries a crew in uniform, an orchestra, a swimming bath, a garden, the population of a thriving town. She takes only a very small cargo, of gold in chests each worth five thousand pounds, silver piled in loose bars to the size of a haystack, precious stones in little buckskin sacks, tea and spices, ivory, apes and peacocks—just as she did in the days of Solomon. Of course, there are modern improvements—saloon, second cabin, and steerage apes and peacocks—but the principles of the business are unchanged. The liner is voluptuous, rapid, a creature of gilded splendour and monotonous boredom.

The tramp has neither passengers nor mails nor specie. As to uniform, that existed only in magazine illustrations, until His Majesty, during the Great War, granted the honour to officers. The people do not put on evening dress for tea. The tramp's gait is a crawl. She does not advertise, she is not beautiful; indeed, tramps are said to be turned out from our shipyards in hundred-yard lengths, like a string of sausages. Yet for all that, the popular authors who follow in the mistaken footsteps of Mr. Kipling are quite astray in describing these ships as coffins. Their death-rate is one-fifth that of sailing vessels, and the British are fifty per cent. safer than ships under other flags. Indeed, in all the annals of the sea no type of vessel has ever been evolved so perfectly practical, efficient, and trustworthy as the British tramp steamer. Because she is economical and ably handled, she carries half the cargo trade of the world.



During the Great War the officers and men of the Mercantile Marine, as all the world knows, have covered themselves with glory. Every ship that sailed the seas was "doing her bit," and—as in peace-time—the "tramp" steamers came in for their share of hard knocks and odd adventures. Mr. Pocock has some very good stories to tell concerning the "tramps" and the splendid men that man them.

Tramp steamers may or may not be turned out like strings of sausages, but it is certainly true that the same shops breed and turn out our tramp engineers by the fathom. A single six-foot length of "Geordie," or Clydeside engineer, with dungaree overalls complete, and a certain profane fluency of speech, is perhaps the most useful product of the United Kingdom. For thoroughness, ingenuity, and headlong daring, the world has never bred such an engineer, and he is one

of the big factors in the British command of the sea.

On this point one story, out of many, may serve for illustration. The chief engineer of the ss. *X*—was neither Clydesider nor Tynesider, but a young man from the South of England. The ship had the usual set of triple-expansion reciprocating engines, and one day, in rough weather, she bent the piston-rod of the intermediate engine. The rod was one-eighth of an inch out of the straight—just enough to disable the vessel and leave her a hulk in the trough of a great seaway, rolling heavily. It was pretty to see how the captain, the cook, and all the dignitaries became obedient servants to that young "chief" while for four hours on end his quiet voice was the only one heard on board. We were lifting immense masses of steel, swung upon tackles, and so held quite steady while the ship was rolling herself inside out. At the slightest error we should have been crushed like beetles, but the "chief" cut out the disabled engine without lifting his voice above a sort of whisper. Then he made steam on the remaining engines and brought us to a seaport for repairs. All this being duly reported to the owners, they sent their orders by cable—and sacked the chief engineer because he had bent that rod! In the Army he would have been recommended for the Victoria Cross, but the British Merchant Service is not sentimental.

Men must be iron-hard to use the sea, and the real mariner seems callous until one knows him. In one tramp voyage we had Cat Cape abeam

when the mate told me a yarn. "It was just hereabout," said he, "that we ran through that Eyetalian barque."

"What did it feel like?" I asked.

"Like b.ing in a hansom cab and running off wood pavement on to cobblestones. Steward said it felt like a cart rattling through a wood."

"You got the boats away for rescue work?"

"Yes. I picked up a jolly fine dagger. I give it to the missus."

"But it couldn't float?"

"No; it was in a sea-chest. Their 'old man's' son was lashed on that chest."

"Alive?"

"Oh, yes. We picked up most of 'em. You should just have seen the Eyetalian captain—fat as a hawgshead 'e was—climbing up our ship's side!"

"So you took the people on to Italy?"

"Not much! Not on your life! D've think we wanted to be hung up for a year's litigation in them Eyetalian Courts, and our ship's expenses thirty quid a day? No; we shoved 'em ashore in Spain."

Cold, callous, matter of fact, iron-hard the man and his story. It did not occur to him to mention the fact that the rescue of the Italians was done in face of almost certain death.

In many tramps I have noticed that the second mate is thin as a pair of scissors, the mate just stout enough to cast a shadow, but the "old man," the master, well-nourished, plump, and of ripe complexion.

"I wish," says the mate, "that the old beggar would choke, or stop ashore and give a chap a chance, or die, or something!" Some day the thin mate will step into the captain's shoes, and make four hundred pounds a year clear of expenses, beside the pickings and, perhaps, a bit of honest smuggling. The "old man" owns a row of villas at Shields or a street in Cardiff, has half an hour's arithmetic for his day's work at sea, is a sound judge of wine and cigars, and passes for a prosperous merchant among the rich men of the seaports. The liner captain is poor, but the master of a tramp is a man of substance.

The owner is supposed to be not less than a millionaire, and a shark at that—so say all mariners. Owners are business men, able, shrewd, and as a rule, I think, enthusiasts who show a fine love and pride in their splendid shipping. The mariner will grouse—that is the nature of the animal—but he will work for a good owner from boyhood to old age, and grumble all the time.

But, on the other side of the picture, I remember three owners who were brothers, and most reputable men. One was a churchwarden, another a Presbyterian elder, and all three were most devout, and, in their smug way, hypocrites. And now observe the methods of rogue owners. Their captain-superintendent went on board one of their ships at her home port and walked on the poop with her master. "Captain," he said, "your ship is losing money."

The captain explained that she was twenty years of age, an old model. Her cargo space

would not hold enough tonnage to pay a profit nowadays.

"She'd make a good loss," said the captain-superintendent.

Note that he did not order the master to cast away the ship. He only hinted, to a married man with a large family; and Captain Z—could not afford to be thrown out of work. So on his next voyage he waited for a quiet moonlight night on the homeward passage, and ran his ship full tilt into a cliff. Having made a big hole in her bows, he realized that the evidence would look bad at the Court of Admiralty. The damning evidence of his incompetence would "dirty his ticket"; and never again would he be trusted with the command of any ship. That is why he backed the ship out into deep water, and let her sink in a hundred fathoms. No divers could go down *there* in search of evidence! He could swear that he had struck a derelict, and would be free from blame. As to the helmsman and the man at the look-out, they were sent on a voyage to Australia before the Court tried the case. And the officer of the watch? He, like the master, was a married man with a family. The verdict of the Court was that the ship had struck a wreck awash, and the rogue owners collected £25,000 insurance to buy them a more profitable ship.

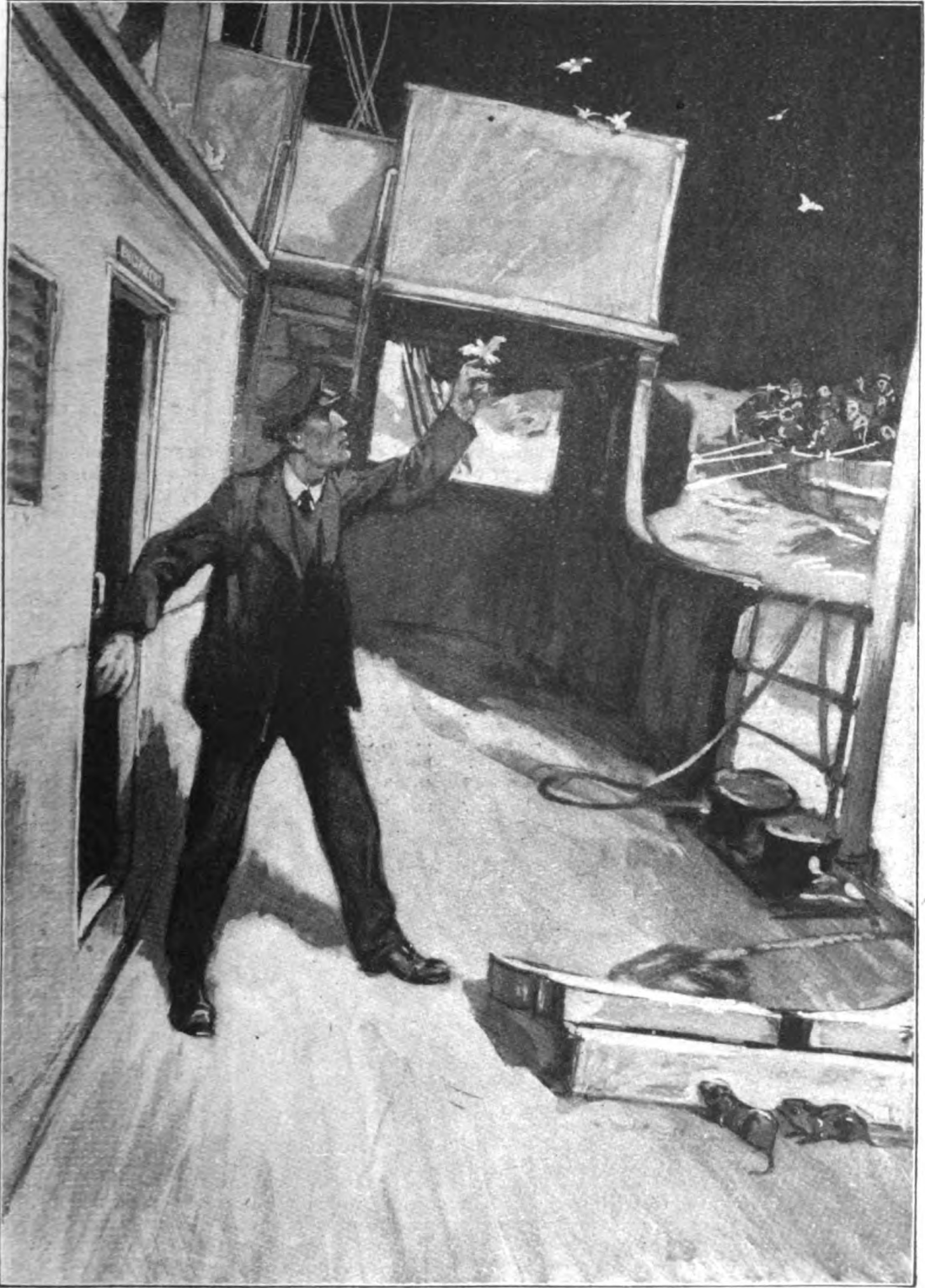
The rest of the story I had from the chief engineer.

"I had to keep the ship afloat until we made deep water. Of course, it was swimming deep down in the stokehold. The firemen wanted to come up the ladders, so I got a couple of bottles—rum it was—from steward, and fed the men a drink for every shovel of coal they got into the furnaces. They worked until they were wet to the neck inside and out. Then I put her in centre-gear. That means 'finished with the engines.' You see, if any divers *did* get down, I wouldn't like them to find my engines in a muddle. Next, I went to my room; I wasn't going ashore in dungarees when I had a decent suit of clothes. So I changed, and got my gold watch and money.

"The ship was bows under then, the water lapping against the bridge bulkhead, and swarms of rats running along the alleyways. As to our people, they were in the boats, captain and all, shrieking at me to come quick before she foundered. She did feel sort of soggy, so I thought I'd best get to the boats. But as I passed the mess-room—the engineer's mess was in the bridge deck—I saw all them canaries, twenty I had in a cage. Couldn't let the little beggars drown, and they wouldn't come out! I had to pull them out by hand, one at a time.

"Then I went to the boats, and we lay on our oars watching. The poor old ship stood on her head, and then I suppose the bulkheads carried away, for she flattened out, decks awash as she went down.

"We all felt pretty bad as we pulled ashore. And would you believe it? There was a Customs man to meet us. We said we were



"Couldn't let the little beggars drown. I had to pull them out by hand, one at a time."

shipwrecked mariners, so he took all our tobacco."

In due time the Admiralty Court cleared

Captain Z——, so the owners gave him a brand-new ship with the same group of officers. But Captain Z—— was not quite the man he had been.

The crime had shattered his ideals in life, broken his nerve, wrecked his character, made him a coward—no longer fit for command, no longer fit for the sea.

On the new ship's first voyage I went as passenger, a stranger, knowing nothing of what had passed. We sailed from a North Sea port, a light ship in water ballast, to load coal at Cardiff and cross the Western Ocean. As we ran down Channel we met a big sou'-wester, a mid-winter gale, and the ship was too light to answer her helm—"turned round and looked at us," as the saying is. The "old man" decided to run for shelter and ride out the gale. But, because he had lost his nerve, he set a wrong course by mistake, a point to the west. The mate showed him this error, so the captain put the ship half a point westward still, out of general cussedness.

I was lying on the cabin sofa, reading a novel, when the steward advised me to get on deck in the open, and not drown like a trapped rat. So I put on sea boots and oilskins and made my way through blinding hail and lashing spray to the bridge. Unable to head the wind, the ship was drifting broadside, on the scend of great rollers, with breaking seas to leeward. Captain Z—— walked up and down wringing his hands and sobbing, proposing to beach the ship.

"What! On that beach?" said the mate.

Then I looked through the spume of the breakers, and there was the beach close by, under our lee.

The mate rang the telegraph, and brought up the chief engineer, to whom he whispered:—

"I'm taking command," he said; "when I anchor, steam up to the anchors and ease the strain on our cables."

The chief agreed to this act of mutiny, and went below to carry out the orders of our new master, who put Captain Z—— at the wheel as quartermaster.

Then that red-headed mate came to me, his cold glittering blue eyes judging me, as he presented a belaying pin. "I leave you in charge," said he, "and if the 'old man' tries to play the fool, just knock him out."

Now I could see the white faces of the coast-guard and other folk ashore who waited for us to strike. Two ministers were offering public prayers for us, and had we known of that at the time we might have thanked them. Now the mate ran forward and got the port anchor away; but as we rode to it, and came up into the wind, the ship rolled dangerously and appeared likely to capsize. It was then that the starboard anchor, swinging from its davit, tore a ringbolt out of the deck, and took charge. The mate yelled, the men jumped clear, but the second mate was caught, clinging to the forestay. The fluke of the anchor touched the peak of his cap. Meanwhile the mate, jumping from the fo'c'sle head, caught the man at the winch with both heels on the nape of the neck. The aim was good—the seaman rolled stunned into the scuppers—and the mate cleared the fouled drum of the winch so that the swinging anchor was launched overboard. Thus the life of the second

mate was saved. "A pity, that," said the mate afterwards. Then the chief engineer steamed gently up to the anchors, easing the strain on our cables.

Meanwhile the steward had been ringing his bell, and now came forward, bidding us come to tea. For a minute or two the mate and I stood on the poop, watching the folk ashore, the coastguard with their rescue gear all ready. We joined Captain Z—— at the cabin table: "It's a shame," said I, "that the coastguard heard our tea bell, and don't get any tea."

With his cup half raised to his lips, the captain looked reproachfully at me. Then he slammed down the cup and fled to his bunk.

"Don't spoil your appetite," said the mate to me.

"I want to."

"I wouldn't. There's Devonshire cream in all them farms ashore."

Then in a loud voice, for the "old man" to hear, he described to me how drowned men sink, and why their corpses come afloat again. We had been strangers, but now he trusted me, and we were like brothers then, and afterwards.

After supper I went for a smoke with "Geordie," the chief engineer, who told good yarns, and at eight o'clock the mate rolled in to join us.

Up on the fo'c'sle head he had seen the port anchor carried away, so that the ship hung only to the starboard anchor now, and its chain was held by a one-inch bolt to the foremast. If that bolt parted!

He had been to the chart-room to report, and found Captain Z—— there with the second mate, both in life-belts. He did not report, but came to the chief's room, smoked a pipe, and said nothing about our peril. He told us yarns until 8.30, then tapped out his pipe, and left us. At nine the wind dropped, and, heaving the starboard anchor, we steamed to the open sea. It is said that no other ship embayed at that particular place has ever escaped.

Throughout that voyage, outward, and homeward from America, I had a strong presentiment of death, and it was very nearly realized. It was in mid-Atlantic, on the homeward run, that we were driving in thick weather before a strong sou'-wester. I was with the mate on the bridge, peering ahead through the deepening shadows of evening, when he clutched my arm and pointed. Dead ahead I saw a plank slide down the flank of a sea—a very long yellow plank, broad in the middle, tapering at both ends. We were driving straight into it, but the mate made a sign to the man at the wheel, who put the helm over a little. So the plank slid by, close under our side, and by the measure of the ship, its length was two hundred feet. Seeing by the nine-foot breadth of it that this was a ship's keelson, I asked the mate if she would be a barque.

"A brig, I think," he said; "and bottom up. Her load of timber keeps her just afloat. Suppose we'd come along ten minutes later!"

We should not have seen that floating death,



"The fluke of the anchor touched the peak of his cap."

but struck, and gone to the bottom, leaving no trace—a "missing" ship.

Next day Captain Z—— asked me if I had seen a derelict.

"Ask the mate," said I, and the poor wretch turned away with a sigh; he dared not speak to his chief officer.

"You mark my words," said Geordie, when

we parted, "he'll lose this fine new ship within a year."

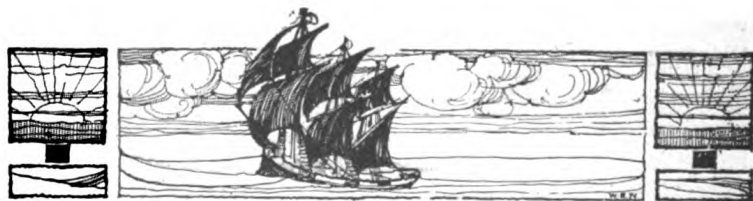
Geordie was right, for well within a year his daughter sent me news that this poor coward had wrecked his ship.

These tales of peril may give a false impression of tramp life. In many tramp voyages I have seen some dangers, but no deaths. Seafaring men are much more frightened of street traffic than they are of the sea deeps. The tramps are safe and comfortable, go with dry decks when the swift liners are awash, and spend their time visiting delightful seaports where a fellow must be a dull dog indeed if he fails to have a good time ashore. On one voyage we were loading wheat at Sevastopol for Aarhus, a port in Denmark, and the seamen went ashore to get drunk. They had succeeded when the local Russians chased them out of a bar. So they came on board, excepting only our Manxman, Christian, one of the handsomest men I ever met. He went back to the bar, where he took on the hostile Russians single-handed, defeated them, and came aboard triumphant. His shipmates having deserted him, he hauled them out one by one, and thrashed them before he went to bed. Next morning he came aft to have his wounds bandaged. That day we put to sea, and, as we should be home a little before Christmas, the captain invested in twenty good, fat turkeys. But these birds are very delicate, so the sea put them off their feed, and the captain ordered one to be served for the cabin dinner—to save its life, he said. A day later the turkeys were still off their feed, not likely to live through the voyage, so the captain had them killed, and served up to all hands as a treat. We had finished our fine dinner in the cabin when the second mate came aft, reporting that the seamen wanted to see the captain. Aft they came in a state of mutiny, led by Christian, wanting to know "what the — turkeys had died of," and demanding "straight Board of Trade rations." There's the seafaring man as he is, the most whimsical of mankind.

But the officers are all true mariners, and each of them has more natural history about him than any two landmen ashore. The master of a tramp told me once how his ship's company were stricken with Asiatic cholera. He complied with the Board of Trade regulations, camping all the people on the hatchways and scrubbing out and whitewashing between decks, but still the people were dying. Then he remembered a

secret picked up in India, where the natives use vinegar as a styptic. He had a few cases of mixed pickles, which the seamen and firemen welcomed, as did the deck officers. All of them lived. As to the engineer officers, who found mixed pickles beneath their dignity, they threw the bottles overboard—and died.

It is traditional that mariners should be ill-paid, wretchedly housed, under-fed, bullied, even murdered, and in my boyhood the "lime-juicer" or British ship was usually half-starved, while the grand American clippers were little hells afloat. Men who were treated as brutes behaved as such, and I can well remember seeing, in the low town at Shields, a seaman and his wife throwing their baby at one another's heads by way of a missile. When I first shipped as a seaman before the mast, all hands went drunk to sea. Since then the advent of the tramp steamer has made voyages shorter than they used to be under sail, so that men can escape to land, and a badly-managed vessel loses all her hands at every port. That does not pay. Also Mr. Samuel Plimsoll, with his load-line, put an end to the overloading of ships. Captain Moore and his Merchant Service Guild, and Mr. Havelock Wilson, with his magnificent Union, have done heroic work. But greatest of all factors is the war, the supreme test of the British Merchant Service. When the Germans commenced the unrestricted submarine campaign of promiscuous wholesale murder, the ships of Europe as a whole preferred to remain in port. One cannot blame them. But it is said that no British ship lacked British seamen, that never did one crew refuse to sail. The British half of the world's shipping fed the Allied nations, carried the armies and munitions, kept the command of the sea, and rescued the menaced liberties of mankind. I met a merchant seaman who was in three ships torpedoed in one day, but never heard of any man who flinched from that heroic service. It is not without some little glow of pride that I recall my last tramp passage as Officer Commanding Troops for France, with about one thousand men—part of the seven millions who made the Southampton run. The seamen of the tramps, to whom in a large measure we owed our safety, had come to their own at last, well-paid, well fed, well housed, well treated, clean, smart in their dress, proud of their trade, commanding all respect. It is the beginning of a better age.



ON FOOT THROUGH SOUTH AMERICA

The story of a wonderful journey. In this instalment the Author describes his wanderings in Bolivia, the quaint religious

by
*Harry A.
Franck*

customs of the people, and his meeting with Tommy Cox, a penniless Englishman, with whom he struck up a partnership.

ILLUSTRATED BY
A. E. HORNE.

VI.

THOUGH my original plan of following the Inca highway from Quito to Cuzco had been accomplished, the thought of turning homeward with half the continent still unexplored had become an absurdity. But the scattered life of that dreary region to the south of the Imperial City promised too little of new interest to be worth covering on foot.

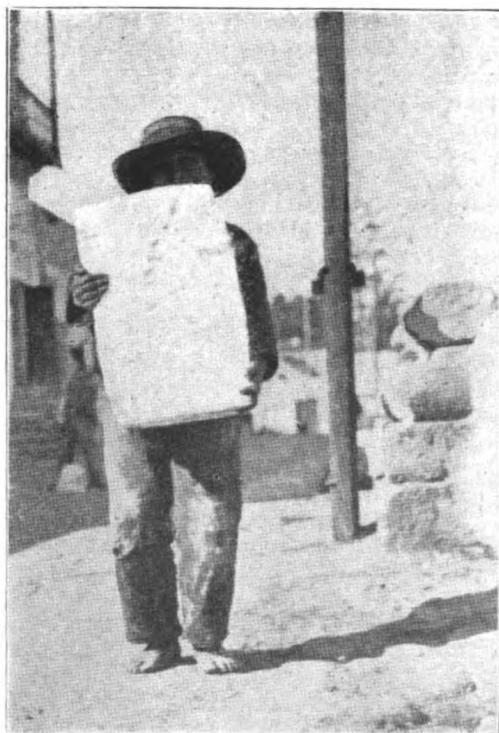
Cuzco has been connected by rail with the outside world since 1908. The train leaves on Tuesdays and Saturdays, spending a night at Sicuani and another at Juliaca, whence a branch descends to Arequipa. Every Friday there is a vertiginous "express" that makes Puno in one day.

The drear and barren land across which lay the branch line rolled ever higher to the Crucero Alto at fourteen thousand six hundred and sixty-six feet. Then we descended gradually. Here and there at the edge of reedy lagoons stood pariuanas—long-legged, rose-tinted birds, the feathers of which in olden days formed the Inca's head-dress. Capital punishment was meted out to anyone of lesser rank who dared to decorate himself with them. Equally sacred were the vicunas, the undomesticated species of the llama family that furnished the imperial ermine.

Unlike the three domesticated species, llama, alpaca, and guanaco, the vicunas are uniform in colour, a reddish-brown with whitish belly, legs, and tail, not unlike a fawn in general appearance. A more delicate animal could scarcely be imagined; the neck seemed hardly larger than a man's wrist, the legs fragile in their slender daintiness. They were graceful as well as swift, even in their running, which resembled the gait of the jack-rabbit in the way they brought front and hind legs together. The

flocks still belong to the Government, as in the days of the Incas, when they were protected by royal edict, under penalty of death. For some years past Peruvian law, too, has forbidden killing them, but the valuable wool and skins are still to be had in the larger cities, for game-wardens are conspicuous by their absence.

What seemed a hopeless desert, thinly covered with dry, wiry bunch-grass, now spread in all directions. We were crossing the vast "Pampa de Arguelles," so named



Arequipa is built of a curious stone, as light as wood. It rapidly hardens when exposed to the air.

from the family that has leased hundreds of square miles of it from the Government. They in turn grant the Indians permission to graze their cattle at twenty-five cents a year for larger animals, and twice that sum for each flock of small ones.

Suddenly a deep-green patch of alfalfa burst out among the glaring rocks, trebling their barrenness by contrast. It was the little oasis of Yura, fed by a small stream, the water of which, reputed efficacious for the cure of disordered livers, is bottled and sold—less widely to-day than before the priests, whose rival establishment produces the "Water of Jesus," threatened with ecclesiastical penalties anyone who drank the other. Then, far away across the Egypt-tinted world, the eye made out below, at first dimly, a green oasis with a wide-spread city covering about half of it. "Ari, quepay!" ("Yes, let us stay a while!") the first settlers are said to have cried when they caught sight of this garden spot; and the train seemed like-minded, setting us down at last in Arequipa, the second city of Peru. Three dawdling days had been required to cover four hundred and twelve miles.

Arequipa, the only place of importance between the Pacific and Titicaca, is strikingly Oriental in atmosphere, with a suggestion of Cairo, thanks to its shuffling donkeys—a hole is slit in their nostrils so that they may more easily breathe this thin highland air—and its encircling desert, yet exceeding the latter in beauty by reason of the snowclad peaks about it.

The Surprised Donkey.

I was now treading close on the heels of civilization of a material sort. Electric street-cars had appeared in Arequipa a bare three months before; with motormen imported from Lima they afforded an efficient service to nearly every corner of the oasis. The innovation had not been without its difficulties, however. One morning I met three *cholos* driving a dozen donkeys marketwards. Suddenly they began to shout and dance about the animals as if

some danger were imminent. A block away sounded the gong of a bright new tram-car, but, as I had never known one to deliberately run down an animal, I wondered at the uproar. To my surprise the car came on without slackening speed. The shrieking *cholos* succeeded in hauling, pushing, or coaxing most of the stubborn brutes off the line, but one pair refused to vary their set course. At the last moment one of them lost courage and side-stepped, but his sturdy black companion kept serenely on, with stubborn down-hung ears and a "to-blazes-with-you" flip of the tail—and just then a corner of the swiftly-moving car caught him on the starboard beam. He turned a complete somersault on the cobbles, rolled on to his feet, and gazed after the still-speeding car with a scowl not unmixed with a ludicrous expression of astonishment.



"The swiftly-moving car caught him on the starboard beam."

Cuzco and Arequipa are reputed the Peruvian strongholds of conservatism. Of the two, the latter is probably more deeply under the spell of the ancient Church. The din of bells was almost constant; during my week in the city I saw no fewer than five images of the Virgin paraded through the streets to the usual accompaniment of kneeling *cholos* and bare-headed whites. Several of Arequipa's *fiestas* are noted for the dancing of wooden saints to barbaric music in the public squares. Others

have fixed periods of calling on their fellows, sallying forth from their home churches to the *plaza*, where, manipulated by the *cholo* bearers beneath, they bow to and finally "kiss" each other amid the fanatical applause of the multitude.

From Arequipa, across Lake Titicaca and *vid* Juli, where the Jesuits claim to have set up the first printing press in America, I reached Yunguyo. I had come at last to the frontier of endless Peru, with the unexpected privilege of walking out of it, as I had entered it eight months before. Yunguyo lies on the neck of a little peninsula, part of which, by the arbitrariness of international frontiers, is Bolivian. The steamer had orders to pick me up in the morning, and, slipping on

Kodak and revolver, I struck out for the sacred city of Copacabana. A league from the landing the road mounted a stony ridge, passed through the two arches of an uninhabited rural chapel, and left the historical land of Peru for ever behind.

Once in Bolivia, it was rare to hear anything of Peru. It was a stony country; in fact, there were more stones than country. Everywhere they lay piled up in high, massive fences, with half-tillable patches between them. Rocks, which the superstitious Indians fancy are impious men turned to stone, stood forth on every hand.

The Holy City of Copacabana. At the end of a five-mile stroll I came upon Copacabana. In the days of the Incas this was a holy city, with a certain

"idol of vast renown among the Gentiles," a place of purification whence pilgrims embarked for the ultra-sacred island of Titicaca. The Church militant would not have been itself had it lost this opportunity of grafting its own superstitions on those of the aboriginals, and some three centuries ago the present "Virgen de Copacabana" was set up, with the usual marvellous tale of her miraculous appearance in this spot. Her servants have been realizing richly on their foresight ever since. A steady stream of pilgrims pours into the holy city from Peru, as well as Bolivia, and from even farther off, all the year round, though August 5th and February 2nd are the days of chief festival and mightiest crowds.

The priest of Pomata had given me a note to the superior of the monastery, who conducted me in person to the large brick-and-tile room reserved for distinguished guests, and advised me to fasten the padlock and put the key in my pocket, "for, though we are here in a monastery, there are people passing continually, and it is safer. Now," he went on, "if you wish to see the customs of the

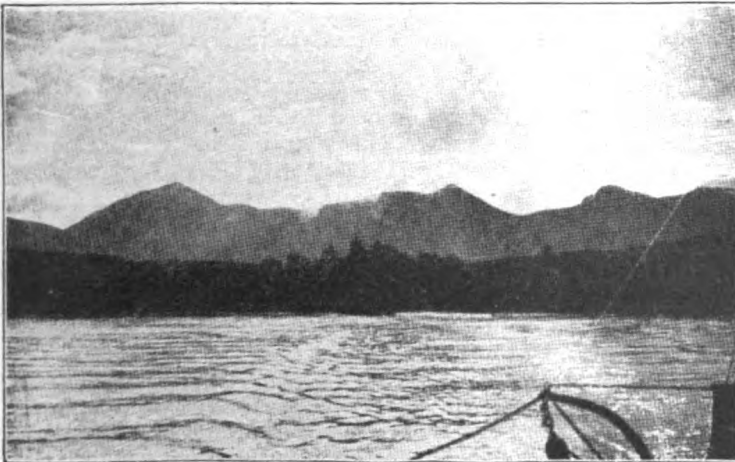


The ancient god of Tiahuanaco, before which the Indians bow down in worship.

pilgrims, you have only to mount that stairway."

I climbed two stone flights in semi-darkness, and found myself in a narrow wooden gallery at the back of a large, high chamber suffused with a "dim religious light." It was painted blue, with a sprinkling of golden stars, as nearly the painter's visualization of heaven, no doubt, as the crudity of his workmanship permitted him to express. Confession and a contribution to the attendant priests are requirements for admittance to the floor of the church below. At the

farther end stood the altar, with a glass-faced alcove in the centre containing the far-famed Virgen of Copacabana. The figure, scarcely three feet high, was cumbered with several silken gowns laden with gold and jewels, and with a blazing golden crown many sizes too large. Round about her were expanses of golden-starred heavens, and half a hundred of what looked to a layman like large daggers threatened her from all sides. The original blue-stone idol having been destroyed by the Spaniards, the present Virgen was fashioned in 1582



Copacabana, the sacred city of Bolivia, on the shores of Titicaca.

by Tito-Yupanqui, lineal descendant of the Incas. He was no artist, but was said to have been inspired by the Virgin herself.

The entire floor below was crowded with kneeling pilgrims. A week is the customary length of stay for pilgrims, with a ceremony of welcome and one of dismissal, separated by a long series of masses, confessions, and purifications—not to mention the ubiquitous fees.

The ceremony we were now witnessing was that of dismissing the departing pilgrims. At about two-minute intervals there knelt on the steps of the altar one person, a man and wife, or sometimes a man, wife, and child, always of the same family. An Indian acolyte in red thrust a lighted candle into a hand of each, the chief priest bowed before the image, while back beside us in the gallery an Indian in a poncho pumped a wheezing melodeon, and the choir, consisting of several boys, four old half-Indian women wrapped to the ends of their noses in black *mantos*, and three merry little girls, knelt on the floor about the instrument and moaned weird hymns. If the pilgrim was of the *gente decente* class, the hymn was in Spanish; if an Indian, it was in Aymara. During the singing and the chanting of the priest another acolyte, in a still more striking robe, stepped forth and covered the kneeling person or persons at the altar with what looked like a richly-embroidered blanket. This, the priest beside me asserted, was the Virgin's cloak, capable of protecting from all evil for a certain length of time.

Then suddenly the cloak was snatched away, the candles were jerked out of the hands of the worshippers, the latter were all but bodily pushed aside, and a priest called out the next name from the list in his hands.

At Guaqui, where I ultimately landed from the steamer—the end of my voyage across Titicaca—I found that no train was to leave for twenty-four hours. I set out afoot, therefore, across the exhilarating plains of Bolivia for Tiahuanaco, twelve miles away, from which town I reached La Paz, America's most lofty capital.

No country of South America has so large a percentage of pure Indian population as Bolivia. The Aymara is by nature silent and aloof, more sullen and cruel than the Quichua, and by no means so obsequious as the aboriginals of Cuzco. He never touches his hat to a passing gringo; unlike the Indian

of Quito, he crosses the main plaza in any dress he chooses, even carrying bundles and sitting on the benches, and, in the region round about, the race has inner organizations under their own chiefs which are virtually independent of the Government. In town, however, he does as he is ordered, though sullenly, and shopkeepers drag him in to perform any low task at whatever reward they choose to give him. As *pongo*, or house-servant, he is farmed out as a child and becomes virtually a slave, though that condition worries him little. A frequent "want ad." in the papers of La Paz runs: "Se alquila *pongo* *contaquia*"—that is, "There is for rent an Indian ser-

vant," who will gather for his master llama droppings as fuel. Festivals and fire-water are his chief amusements. Sunday he reserves as a day on which to get drunk, and couples are reputed to take turns at this recreation, so that one may be in condition to lead the other home when it is over.

Curious Contrasts.

The contrasts of life in La Paz are striking. Here an ancient scribe sits before a typewriter agency; there a group of Indian women squat before the crude products of the country, in front of the electric-lighted emporium of a foreign merchant; and electric trams thrust aside trains of llamas even in the principal streets.

It is difficult for the stranger to get accustomed to seeing droves of llamas, with drivers dressed in the style of Inca days, soft-footing across the main plaza or patiently awaiting their masters with the modern Congress building as a background. Congress, by the way, was in session during my days in La Paz. The visitors' gallery is high up above the perfectly circular chamber, giving the half-hundred representatives the



"Cholos" of La Paz, in their striking costume.

appearance of being down at the bottom of a deep well. They smoked frequently, spoke sitting, were largely white, though the *cholo* class was by no means unrepresented, and among them were two priests in full vestments. Nowhere was there any outward sign of genius, legislative or otherwise. While the man who had the "floor" kept his seat and droned endlessly through something or other, the presiding officer sat motionless, openly bored, and the members slept, smoked, read newspapers, wrote letters, and otherwise busied themselves with the vital problems of the nation after the fashion of legislative bodies the world over.

On a cool, sun-flooded morning, known to the calendar as December 4th, a *cholo* boy of eleven presented himself to carry my baggage to the station, and did so easily, though I should have groaned at the load myself. The second-class coaches left first and slowly corkscrewed up out of the valley, the motor-man, once we were started, coming inside, where it was a bit less frigid, and closing the door behind him.

At Viacha a better train awaited us, her engine turned south. The few stations at which we halted—solitary, wind-swept huts on the edge of salt marshes—bore names fitting to the landscape—Silencio, Soledad, Eucalyptus (here a lone tree afforded the only feature to which a name could be attached). Now and then mirages across the dismal desert gave the hillocks the appearance of islands, the heat-waves seeming to be water lapping their shores.

The new line came to an end in the stony village of Changolla, some sixty-five miles from Oruro and half-way to Cochabamba, which it is in due time to reach.

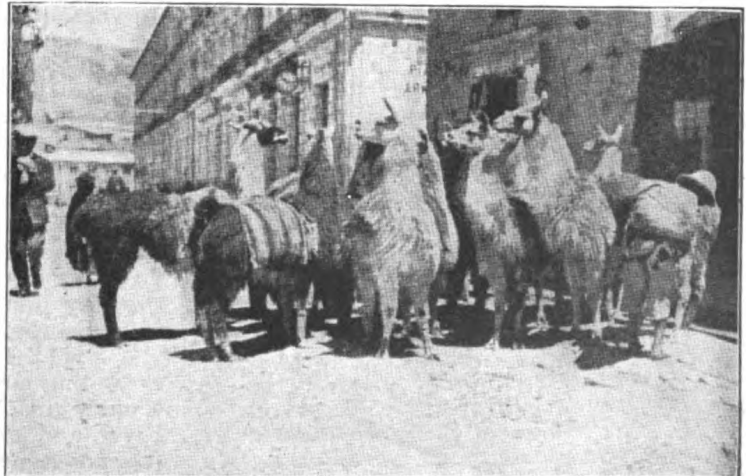
Changolla would have been excited that night were it possible for railroad constructors of long experience in

many wild regions to become so. A fellow-countryman and predecessor of the New Zealander in charge of the camp had gone on the rampage with an American youth and turned bandit in dime-novel style. Filled with distilled bravery, they had "held up" a near-by camp under the impression that the paymaster had arrived, and, disappointed in this, had shot a harmless Chilean *employé*. It took some time and all my papers to calm the suspicions of Changolla before I was offered lodging with the New Zealander. The

"bandits" had sworn to shoot him and his assistants on sight, and a piece of cardboard had been fastened over the window to prevent them from carrying out the threat by lamplight as we ate, though none of the group showed any nervousness at the prospect.

But the highwaying of the pair was amateurish at best. They had made no plans whatever for getting out of town, had even to ask the way, and had as provisions—two bottles of whisky! It was not strange, therefore, that they were rounded up before morning, and my hosts showed no surprise when dawn disclosed the prisoners shackled in one of the box-cars. They had been taken, sound asleep, some ten miles from the scene of the crime, with a bottle in one hand and a gun in the other. The chief looked his fellow-countryman over, expressed his sentiments with a "You're a devil of a bandit, you are!" lit a cigarette, and went on about his day's work. Mounted on asses, with a stick through their elbows behind them, the pair set out for Cochabamba, guarded by a score of soldiers. The punishment for murder in Bolivia is to be taken back to the scene of the crime and shot, though there is many a slip between the law and its execution, and judges, according to my hosts, must be properly "greased" before they will even indict a criminal, particularly when the complainant is a rich foreign company.

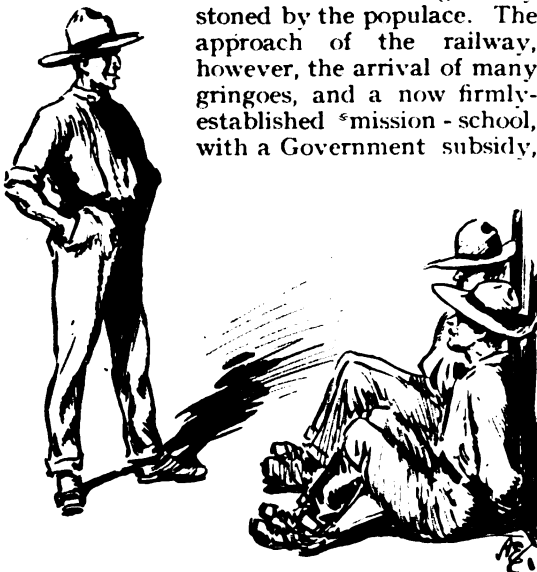
Meanwhile nine enormous carts, each drawn by six sleek and mighty mules, laden with all the bulky material required for railroad construction, to say nothing of my baggage, got under way. I set off ahead. The drivers were a motley gang of Bolivian, Argentine, and Chilean *cholos*, each with the accent peculiar to his nationality. All had long knives in their belts, and were inclined to use them on slight provocation. Several carried their wives with them in the carts, sometimes with a child or two in addition.



A group of llamas in La Paz.

The Capinota River, which we had been following, or rather criss-crossing, for two days, came at last to an alfalfa-green village, exceedingly restful to eyes that had been gazing unbrokenly on the sun-flooded desert, and the trail struck off at right angles up a branch of a stream milky with dust. There I took leave of the baggage-train, with seventeen miles still separating me from Cochabamba. It was not the problem of transporting myself, but rather my baggage, that forced me to trot several times into blazing-hot Parotani in quest of a donkey, but all in vain. At length—strange chances one takes in South America!—I caught a total stranger bound for the city, and he was soon lost in the dust ahead, with all my possessions on the crupper of his mule. The sweating trail, with its plaguing brook, grew in time into a road on the left bank; huts and entire villages sprang up beside me; troops of pack-animals increased to an almost steady stream, and at four I overtook my baggage in Vinto, recovered it by payment of a *boliviano*, and was soon hurtling in a little toy train at the terrifying speed of twelve miles in an hour and forty minutes into the second city of Bolivia.

Cochabamba has been called the "paradise of priests." Men of the cloth swarm, and the town is rated the most fanatical in Bolivia. As late as ten years ago a fire was lighted in the central *plaza* to carry out an *auto-da-fé* against a Protestant who had dared to preach his doctrines in a private house, the materials for the inquisitorial bonfire being the books and furniture of the evangelist. The troops were called upon to interfere and prevented the consummation of the act, but they were not able to save the "heretics" from being cruelly stoned by the populace. The approach of the railway, however, the arrival of many gringos, and a now firmly-established "mission-school, with a Government subsidy,



"You're a devil of a bandit, you are!"

are wearing down somewhat this mediæval point of view.

The "Gringo Bench."

In a corner of the main *plaza* of Cochabamba, where the sunshine streaks upon it through the trees, was the "gringo bench"—a rendezvous at which there were always to be found at least an American and an odd Englishman or two, generally miners, and even more generally penniless. For Bolivia has proved less golden than the rumours that have oozed forth from her interior, and there is no better climate than that of Cochabamba in which to sit waiting for whatever chooses to turn up next.

Occupying the bench at the time of my arrival was Sampson, an extraordinary Cockney, resourceful, quick-witted, and full of quaint sayings. He spoke fluently a colloquial Spanish and considerable Quichua, chewed coca incessantly, and came close to being the ugliest man I had ever set eyes upon. This last-mentioned quality was enhanced by the weird garb he wore—faded overalls with a bib, some remnants of shoes, a woollen neck-cloth *à la* Whitechapel, and an Indian felt hat on the back of his bullet head. His view of life he summed up, among friends, as follows: "I am strictly honest; I never tyke anything I can't reach." As to his resourcefulness, in this identical garb he had gained the *entrée* to the haughtiest class of natives, with whom outward appearances constitute some ninety-nine per cent., and had talked his hypnotic way into the confidence of a lawyer and ex-Senator of Cochabamba to such an extent that the latter contemplated giving him charge of a large tract of land to plant with cotton.

Another bencher, Tommy Cox, had been "down inside" with Sampson on some prospecting scheme that had failed. Originally from Toronto, he was typically English in appearance and speech, a little sandy-haired fellow of twenty-five, the antithesis of his companion in initiative, and of so dim a personality compared to Sampson that one barely noted his existence when the two were together.

When I arrived in Cochabamba nothing was more certain than that I should continue my tramp down the Andes, through Sucre and Potosi, into the Argentine. But plans do not keep well in so warm a climate. I sat one day musing on the trip ahead of me, when Sampson cut in.

"Ere!" he said. "If you're looking for something new, why don't you shoot across country by Santa Cruz to the Paraguay River and down to Asuncion and B. A.? (Buenos Ayres). I don't think it's ever been done by a white man alone and afoot."

The idea sprouted. When I began to make inquiries, however, I learned that the proposed trip was "impossible." Several of my informants quoted recently-received letters to prove it. The last hundred leagues would be entirely under water; the wild Indians of Monte Grande would see to it that I should not get so far, to say nothing of chest-deep mud-holes, "tigers," and swarms of even more savage insects, and many days without food or human habitation. That settled it. In Bogota the tramp down the Andes had been "impossible," but had long since lost that charming quality. I decided to strike eastward in quest of the Paraguay.

"I wouldn't mind tackling it myself," sighed Tommy, when I mentioned my decision to the benchers. "I'm badly needed in B. A. But I'm stony broke. Of course, if I could find anyone who would take along a steamer-trunk-size man as excess baggage——"

Though I was but thinly furnished with *bolivianos*, and the nearest possible source of supply was Buenos Ayres, I concluded that the world-wanderers' code of honour forbade me to leave Tommy to waste away on the "gringo bench," and we joined forces. He was to carry his proportionate share of such baggage as I could not throw away, including the tin kitchenette and the bottle of forty-per-cent. alcohol that went with it—if experience proved I could trust him with that—leaving me, thanks also to the offer of a fellow-countryman to carry the developing-tanks to Santa Cruz on his cargo-mule, only a moderate load.

It was two months from the day I had walked into Cuzco that one of Cochabamba's toy trains carried us past adobe towns and mud fences and set us down in Punata in time for dinner in the *picanteria* where Tommy had once before washed down a similar plate of stringy roast pork with a glass of *chicha*. Then we swung on our packs and struck eastward into the unknown.

For a week the going was not unlike that down the Andes, though it grew gradually lower as the endless ridges of the eastern slope calmed down slowly, like the waves of some tempestuous sea. It was only on the road that I began really to make the acquaintance of Tommy. In spite of his Canadian birth he dressed like a Liverpool dock-labourer, with a heavy cap, a kerchief about his neck, and a heavy winter vest, which he could not be induced to shed however hot the climate, though he readily enough removed his coat. He had given Cochabamba ample opportunity to show its gratitude at his departure, but the fourteen *bolivianos* he had gleaned turned out to be



"Solemnly eating soft-boiled eggs with the point of his faithful trowel."

barely sufficient to keep him in cigarettes on the journey. His share of the load he carried in the half of a hectic tablecloth, of mysterious origin, tied across his chest, as an Indian woman carries her offspring. His own possessions consisted wholly and exclusively of a large, sharp-pointed, proudly-scoured trowel, for Tommy was by profession a bricklayer and mason. This general convenience, weapon, sign of caste, and hope of better days to come he wore through the band of his trousers, as the Bolivian *peon* carries his long knife, and the services it performed were unlimited. I was never nearer throwing my Kodak into a mud-hole than when it failed to catch Tommy solemnly eating soft-boiled eggs with the point of his faithful trowel.

We were following now the course of the little, all-but-waterless Piray, some day to join the Mamoré and the Amazon. There were many pack-trains of donkeys and mules going and coming. Thunder grumbled frequently far off to the east. Towards sunset we came upon an hacienda-house, before which hung a bullock on a clothes-line—in the process of being charquied, and already as succulent as the sole of an old boot. The haughty *hacendado* grudgingly sold us chunks of the already-too-long-dead animal at the breath-taking price of fifty *centavos* a pound, and steeping tea in water so thick it could all but stand alone, we cut off slabs of the meat and thrust them into the fire on the ends of

sticks, to eat it half-raw and unaccompanied, like *gauchos* of the pampas.

All day we ploughed through dense forest, wet and soggy, singing with insect life, a roaring tropical shower bursting upon us now and then, after each of which the red sun blazed out through the thick, humid air. With dusk we waded heavy-kneed into La Guardia, sticky and sweated as the dweller in the tropics must always be who cannot spend the day in a hammock, fighting swarms of gnats while we waited patiently for the promised antidote for our raging appetites. Twice during the day we had climbed padlocked bars across the trail. I had fancied them toll-gates, but found they were *aduanillas*—little custom-houses for the collection of duty on goods entering, or produce leaving, the department of Santa Cruz. Each hide exported paid about sixty-five cents; the flour that had come all the way from Tacoma, Washington, by ship, train, and mule, had added to its already exorbitant price a high departmental duty. No wonder chunks of boiled yuca commonly took the place of bread!

We drifted at last into a sand-paved, silent, tropical city street, and on the last afternoon of the year, with Cochabamba three hundred and thirty-five miles behind us, sat down dripping, a week's lack of shave veiling our sun-toasted features, in the central plaza of Santa Cruz de la Sierra.

Tommy had heard so many stories of the

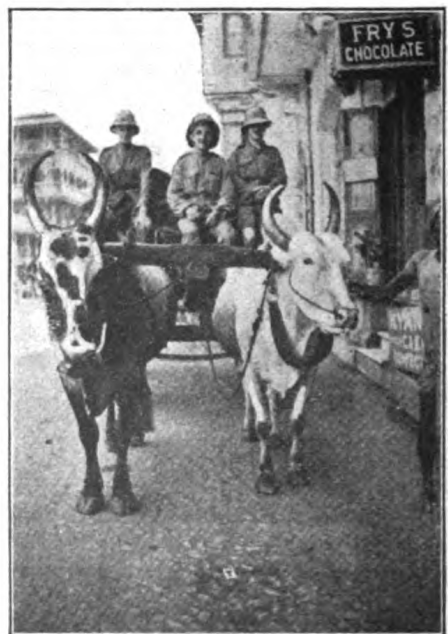
generosity of the Crucenos that he was astonished to have reached the centre of the town without being invited from some doorway to come in and make his home there as long as he chose. This was doubly annoying, since rumour had it that white men were so much in favour with the gentler sex that a sandy-haired one as handsome as Tommy fancied himself to be was in danger of being damaged by the feminine rush his appearance was sure to precipitate. After a time he rose to carry his perplexity back to where we had seen the British vice-consular shield covering the front of a house.

When I met him again he had told his sad tale so effectively that he had been "put up" at both hotels by as many compatriots and was eating regularly at each, though taking care not to let his right hand know what the left was carrying to his mouth. After dark, in a humid night made barely visible by a few candle street-lamps, I splashed out to the hut of Manuel Abasto in the outskirts, to sleep under the trees in the canvas-roofed hammock of one of the American prospectors. The hut was crowded with *peons*, already half drunk, languidly fingering several guitars and now and then raising mournful voices in some amorous ballad. At midnight church bells rang and one distant whistle blew weakly to greet the New Year, but the music of the tropical rain on the canvas over my head soon lulled me to sleep again.

(To be concluded.)

WHERE WEST MEETS EAST.

"EAST is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet," sings Kipling, but they seem to have done so to a certain extent in the accompanying snapshot, which was taken by a correspondent just after he landed in Bombay. The smiling British "Tommies" on the bullock-wagon strike the first Western note, and a glance at the sign above the shop to the right of the picture indicates that another well-known British institution is also very much in evidence in the "unchanging East." Which goes to show that, whether in East or West, a good thing is certain of appreciation.



ACROSS E. AFRICA *in the* RAINY SEASON



by *LIEUT LEO
WALMSLEY MCRAF*
*ILLUSTRATED BY
W. H. HOLLOWAY*



An interesting description of a terrible journey through flooded country in the height of the rainy season in East Africa. In this instalment the Author describes

his adventures in the Livingstone Mountains. Lieut. Walmsley's narrative gives one some idea of the difficulties of campaigning in the African bush.



III.



AFTER a few weeks' stay at Njombe, during which time the rains became, if anything, worse than ever, I received orders to march to Old Langenberg, the chief port on the northern extremity of Lake Nyassa, where I should find a steamer that would take me and my stores to Fort Johnston, in Nyassaland. The distance between Njombe and Langenberg is only sixty miles, but the road lies through the wildest and most rugged part of the Livingstone Mountains, and even in the dry season it is no easy proposition to tackle. Now, in the height of East Africa's record rains, when every rivulet was a raging torrent and every road a canal, when the mountain sides were swept with freezing winds or hidden in dense mist, it promised to be a journey full of adventure.

In this respect I was not disappointed.

I had to take with me from Njombe about fifty loads of aeroplane stores and a complete hangar. A sergeant and four mechanics were detailed to travel with me and assist in all technical matters relating to the packing and unpacking of the stores.

For the first twenty or thirty miles we were able to travel by car, but when we reached the foothills of the Livingstones it was necessary to transfer everything to a large convoy of native porters who had been sent from the lakeside to meet me. These men were chiefly Yaos, strong-limbed, cheerful-dispositioned fellows, who, instead of keeping up a continuous grouse, like the porters of the coast, march gaily along with a song or chant on their lips. Fifty pounds was as much as one could expect each of them to carry through the mountain, and the loads were roughly

weighed out and apportioned by their own *jambes*, or headman. When all was ready the cry went up, "Haija! Haija! Safari!" ("Come on! Come on! The road!") and the long column, led by the chief headman, commenced to move slowly forward up the narrow path that led almost vertically to the summit of the foothill.

People who picture tropical Africa as a land of interminable jungle and swamp would be very much surprised could they see the country through which we were now passing. Mile upon mile of rolling, dome-shaped, treeless hills, clad sparsely with grass and heath, and but for the presence of the porters there was little to distinguish it from the hilly regions of Derbyshire and north-west Yorkshire. Through the valleys hurried swollen streams, which here and there fell in feathery cascades over rocky beetling cliffs. The banks of these streams were thick with flowers, but never did we see so much as a respectable-sized bush. There were few inhabitants and no sign at all of villages, but we discovered later that building material is so scarce that the natives are forced to live in caves and dug-outs.

For several hours we climbed steadily, and then, about 3 p.m., the rain commenced. A biting easterly wind sprang up and added to our discomfort, and we staggered along the narrow, slippery path feeling about as happy as so many cats in a thunderstorm. The scantily-clad porters suffered terribly from the cold, but they sang in spite of it, and their cheery optimism gave us new heart. About 4 p.m. we reached a wide, undulating tableland, when the monotonous grass-land ceased and gave way to sparse forest, through which the path meandered like a giant worm.

The trees sheltered us somewhat from the wind, but the rain fell so heavily that the path was little else than a gushing stream of water. Hardly had the head of the column entered the forest than a mighty shout went up: "Tembo! Tembo! Tazama!" ("Elephant! Elephant! Look out!")

**An
Unpleasant
Predicament.**

Loading my rifle, I rushed forward. There, standing in the middle of the path only a hundred yards away, his trunk swaying like a pendulum, his beady eyes flashing angrily, was an enormous bull elephant! My rifle was an ordinary '303, it was the first elephant I had ever seen in my life, and from what I had been told about these brutes there was every prospect of his charging immediately. A rapid glance round showed me that there was not a respectable-sized tree within a mile, and I also discovered that the porters had all slipped quietly away through the undergrowth and that I was left to face the monster alone. The wind was blowing towards him, and there was not the slightest doubt that he was aware of my presence. I began to feel very unhappy. Many a time I had pictured meeting one of these great animals. In my mind's eye I had seen myself coolly stalking up to within a few yards of it, carefully selecting the vital spot, taking steady aim, firing, then calmly lighting a cigarette preparatory to measuring the tusks. Now my one great desire in life was

middle of the great grey avalanche of flesh and bone. Then I slipped and fell. I heard the sound of breaking timber, felt the ground tremble as though shaken by an earthquake—and slowly realized that the beast had missed me.

Three or four hundred yards away I could hear it tearing headlong through the forest, and, judging by the terror-stricken screams of the men, I concluded that at least half of them must have been trampled to death. It transpired, however, that there were no casualties, but the crank-case of an aero-engine that happened to have been left in the path suffered considerably. We saw no more of the elephant.

We were not long in getting under way again, and just before nightfall sighted the camp fires of Tandala, a late German mission-station, where we were to spend the night. I was invited to stay with the Camp Commandant, a very cheery gentleman who had recently returned from Nyassaland with considerable supplies of European groceries and other products of civilization. Included in the treasure-trove was some Scrubbs' bath ammonia, and I was presented with a bottle of this delectable liquid. Manganza soon had a hot bath prepared, and he watched me while I poured in a little of the powerful-smelling chemical.

"What's that, master?" he asked, with his unflinching curiosity.

"Dowa—medicine," I replied. "Smell!"

And I passed the bottle to him.

The nostrils of the Negro are very large and his lung capacity runs into many cubic inches. Manganza pushed the nozzle of the bottle nearly half an inch up his nose and breathed in. The effect was immediate and volcanic. When he recovered, instead of appearing annoyed with me, he simply shouted for Hamza Bin



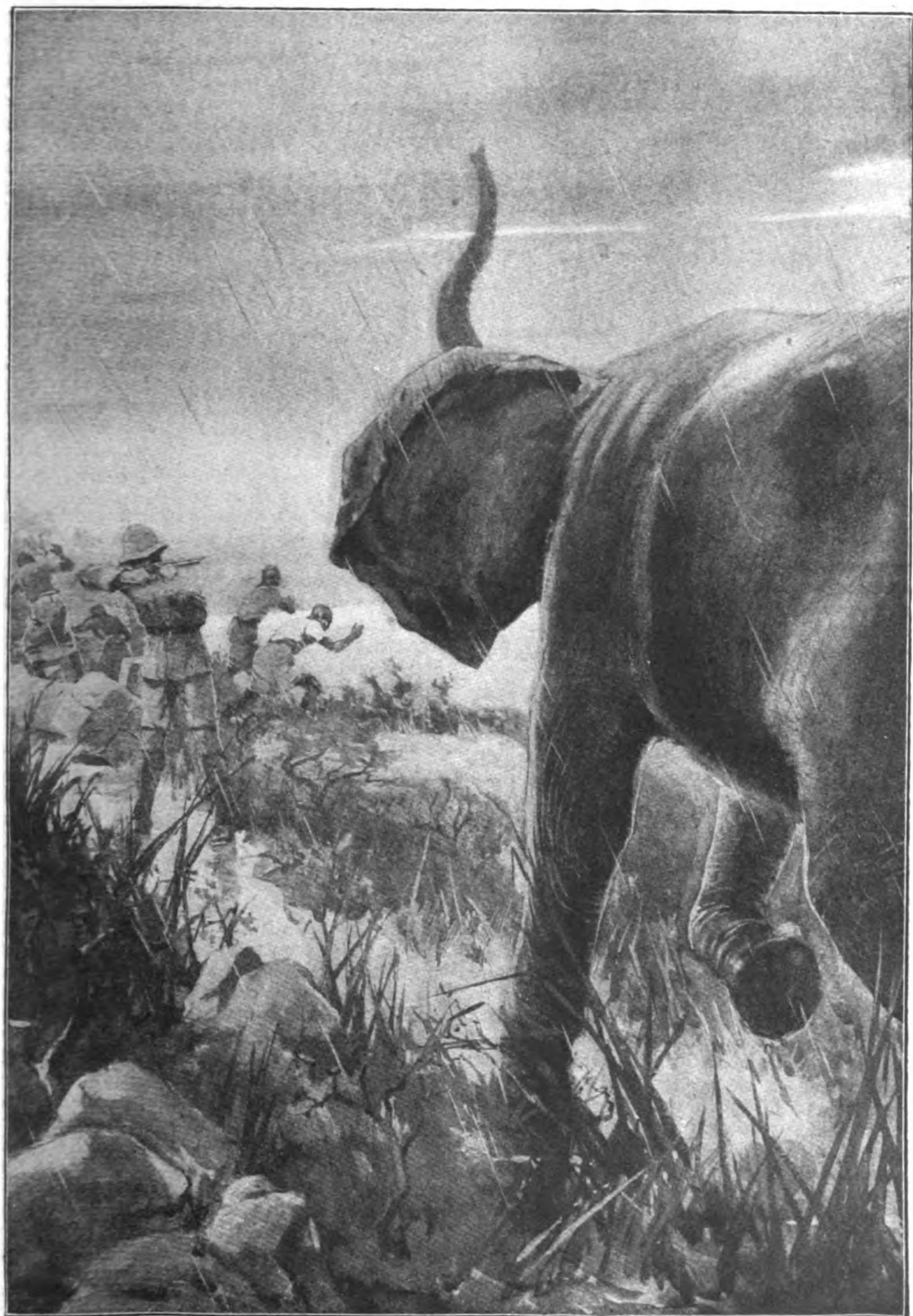
In the Livingstone Mountains.

to see a huge hole in the ground into which I might disappear.

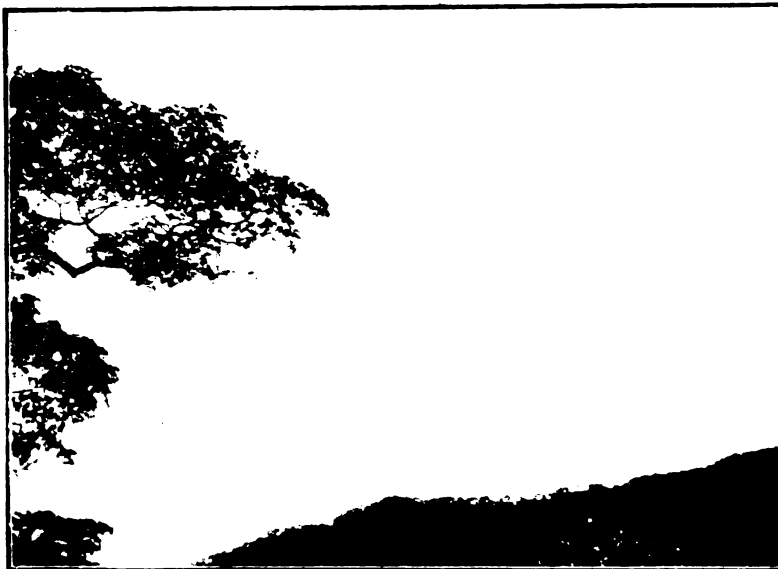
"Would it notice if I walked backwards?" I wondered. Still facing it, I began to shuffle slowly back, and then, with a shrill trumpeting, the brute suddenly flung its trunk upwards and charged. My heart came into my mouth. I felt my hair bristling under my helmet, yet somehow or other I had sufficient control over my nerves to stand where I was, lift my rifle, and fire into the

Nazar, my second boy. Seizing this unfortunate wretch by the wool, Manganza, with great dexterity, forced the bottle up his nose and commanded him to breathe, encouraging this operation by a smart slap on the poor lad's chest. The general effect this had was even more dramatic than in Manganza's case, and, lest Hamza should be persuaded to pass the joke on, I deemed it advisable to rescue the bottle.

We breakfasted an hour before sunrise.



"The brute suddenly flung its trunk upwards and charged."



The first view of Lake Nyassa.

The climbing began almost immediately after leaving Tandala, the path zigzagging up the face of a steep cliff which towered nearly a thousand feet above the tableland. Half-way up we found ice, and soon the path resolved itself into a glorious slide, very convenient for anyone wishing to get down in a hurry, but horribly difficult for those who wanted to get up. One could hardly help laughing to see the poor Yaos trying to get a footing on the slippery surface, and Manganza—who carried no load—shrieked with delight until he happened to strike a particularly well-lubricated patch himself. Even his matchless sense of humour failed to produce a grin when he finally fetched up against a cactus in the vicinity of Tandala.

It took us four hours to climb that thousand feet, and, in spite of a wind that felt like a million whips, we were bathed in perspiration when we reached the top. Here we rested, but as there was no fuel for making fires there was no temptation to loiter long. The scenery was magnificent. We had passed the region of the dome-shaped grassy hills, and were now in the heart of the wildest and most rugged part of the Livingstones. The tremendous peaks that surrounded us were rocky and untamed, although here and there on the broader ledges we saw tiny gardens of maize belonging to the hardy mountain dwellers. How they reached some of these patches of cultivation was a mystery, for no one short of an Alpine expert could have climbed such terrible cliffs. We were told that they preferred to have their *shambas* in these risky places because of the elephants, which, in the space of a few minutes, will undo the constant labours of many years.

The going now became much easier. For many miles the path crept along the face of a mighty saddle-backed spur, but high peaks to the west still held the lake hidden from our sight. According to the map we were eight thousand five hundred feet above sea-level, and the air was as cold and invigorating as on a sunny day in early spring in England. The sun, indeed, shone so brightly that we began to think that at last the rains had washed themselves out.

At 3 p.m. we rounded the last and highest mountain, and then,

emerging from a dense patch of forest, we suddenly had our first sight of the lake. To describe the picture that we saw before us, framed by the black, wind-twisted branches of the mountain trees, is beyond my powers.

At first I decided to call a halt, but the chief headman of the porters told me we must hurry on because of the cloud that sometimes settled down very rapidly and obscured even the path.

Touch and Go.

In my exalted frame of mind the singing of the porters and the ribald jests of the white mechanics grated somewhat on my nerves, and I decided to climb to the summit of the mountain, some two hundred feet above, in order to get away from the noise and enjoy the scene to its full capacity. Telling Manganza that I should rejoin the column in fifteen minutes, I started climbing up through the heath and bracken, and in a short time came to a gap in the forest that revealed, if anything, a more beautiful view than the first. But since leaving the path an extraordinary change had come over the weather. The sun still shone, but numerous black and heavy clouds had appeared, apparently from nowhere, and were now hanging over the lake or resting on the higher peaks to the south. A particularly large one seemed to be floating rapidly towards my own mountain-top, and—fool that I was!—I sat there idly watching it and the beauty of the lake below. Suddenly the cloud seemed to lose its shape, and immediately a heavy, wet, impenetrable mist fell like a blanket from the sky, blotting out the sunshine and the hills and the lake, and making everything so dark and dense that in a

second or two I could hardly see a yard ahead of me.

It was a horrible sensation. I had been sitting within a few feet of a precipice which had a sheer drop of at least a quarter of a mile. Dare I attempt to retrace my steps to the path and run the very considerable risk of losing my way? I had nothing to tell me my bearings, but many months of flying in the West had given me a sixth sense for finding direction. Deciding on immediate action, I turned from what I thought was the edge of the cliff and commenced very gingerly to climb down, hanging on to the tough bracken and feeling the way with my feet. I had progressed about ten yards when I began to realize that the ground was much steeper there than the place which I had first ascended. I must wait for the cloud to lift after all. Then, without a second's warning, I felt my feet slipping. Fiercely I dug into the roots of the undergrowth with my hands—I screamed with terror—nowhere could I find anything that would hold and check my fall.

At last I struck the root of a tree, but it had passed before I could grip my bleeding fingers round it. I was gathering speed—it would be only a matter of seconds now before I reached the cliff! Once more I screamed—and then came a sudden jerk round my shoulders and a sharp pain under my arm.

I believe that after that moment I must

have lost consciousness, for I have only the dimmest memory of Manganza climbing down the steep face of the cliff and helping me slowly up to safer ground. By that time the cloud had passed and, looking down, I realized the ghastly death that would have overtaken me but for the lucky fate that had ordained I should be wearing over my shoulders that day a Kodak, with its case and strap. When I started slipping the heavy camera trailed behind, and it had finally caught on an old tree-stump and pulled me up *within six feet* of the vertical face of the precipice! Manganza, who had left the

convoy to warn me about the approaching cloud, had heard my screams, and at great personal risk made his way to my side just in the nick of time, for the strap was chafing badly with my struggles to break free. Needless to say, I seized Manganza's paw and wrung it with all my might.

Regaining the path, we found that it descended the mountain-side in a series of zigzags, the last emerging on a small tableland similar to that of Tandala. In the centre of this tableland was a large village and a huge porters' camp, where the Yaos were already making themselves at home. After my adventures I was glad enough to sit down and drink a strongly-brewed cup of tea.

In the evening I wandered down to the village. The headman spoke Ki-Swahili, and after numerous salaams invited



"It would be only a matter of seconds before I reached the cliff!"

me to join him in a little dinner. Assenting with a certain amount of trepidation, I walked with him to the village square, where nearly all the inhabitants were squatted in a circle round a dish containing an enormous heap of paste or dough. I was assigned the place of honour, but deemed it wisest to wait till the feeding became general before trying anything myself. Evidently the accepted manner of dealing with the paste was as follows. Each person put his hand into the heap and extracted a piece as large as a tangerine orange, and then kneaded this in his hand until he had made a little cup. Dipping the cup into a small basin of soup, he closed it, and rubbed the whole thing into a ball—the soup, naturally, being inside. It was then swallowed, with obvious relish.

Bearing in mind that it was my first experience, I made my little ball very well, and the chief quickly recognized that I was quite accustomed to moving in the best society. But I gave myself badly away when I tried to eat it, for in the very act of passing it into my mouth I put on too much pressure, the ball burst, and the sticky soup spurted all over my face! The ill-bred porters laughed until they were helpless, and in the general excitement I retired to my tent with as much dignity as I could screw up.

The headman followed me to express his apologies, and after washing myself I forgave him and asked if he would take a little *chakula* with me. Feeling perhaps that he owed me a revenge, he accepted my invitation, and I proceeded to open a tin of herrings in tomato.

"What are they?" he asked, as I showed him the delectable contents.

"Fish," I replied.

"But how did they get inside that tin?"

"Ah, yes!" I answered, after a moment's

thought. "I was forgetting how dull* of brain you people are. Now, when you want some fish for breakfast, I suppose you trot down to the lake with nets and traps and lines, and all that sort of apparatus? You work hard all day in the hot sun, and even when you get your fish you have to clean them and cook them."

"Only too true, master," he answered.

Fishing "Yes," I went on.
Extraordinary. "You're dreadfully out of date. You see, when we want fish, we simply get thousands of these tins and sail out to the fishing grounds. In each tin we place a tomato and then lower them over the side. The little fishes come along and eat the tomatoes, which contain medicine that makes them curl up in the tins and go to sleep. Then we pull a string, the tin closes, and is hauled into the boat, and there

you are—'herrings in tomato'; or perhaps 'tomatoes in herring.'"

I added as an after-thought: He was very much impressed, and he tackled them with far more relish than I had done his beastly paste and glue. The next course was plum-and-apple jam. At first sight he did not like the look of the sticky green-blue jelly (I have met soldiers who did not, for that matter!). But when I finally persuaded him to take a little on his finger and touch his tongue he changed his views. His mouth widened into a grin that stretched from ear to ear, his eyes bulged till



Elephant tracks across the road in the Livingstone Mountains.

they nearly left their sockets, and without so much as asking my permission, he put his hand into the tin, scooped out the whole contents, and transferred them to his capacious maw. After he had licked out the tin he called for his wife and children, and they were permitted to do likewise. For all

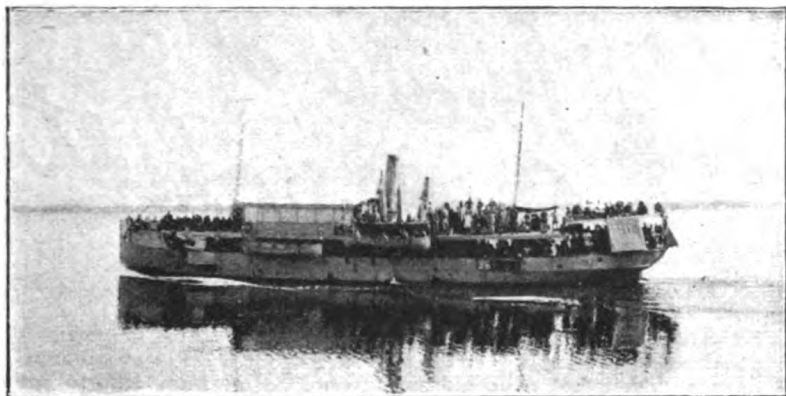
I know, that tin is still rolling round Africa, passing from tongue to tongue like some sacred and wonderful fetish.

Immediately below the table-land was an immense crater-like hollow, over

four thousand feet deep, and the cliffs that formed it were practically perpendicular. The path had been hewn and blasted out of the face of the cliff, and there were places where only six or seven inches separated the feet of the traveller from the precipice. Nerve-racking as it was for us, imagine the poor porter, carrying a load of nearly sixty pounds on his head, feeling a way down the frozen, slippery ground, with only one free hand by which to steady himself. Sometimes we passed under waterfalls all decked with icicles, occasionally we entered wonderful fern-hung rock grottoes, sometimes we crawled so near to the cliff edge that we turned almost sick with fear and had to wait a while till our nerves steadied. Glad indeed were we to reach the bottom of the gorge, through which a much-swollen river surged and boiled. For nearly a mile we followed its banks, through a jungle of ferns and rank elephant-grass, and then we came to the base of the crater cliffs once more. Our terrible climb down, then, had been in vain; before reaching the lake we would have to ascend nearly as high as our last night's camp! Our spirits sank as we gazed up at the great wall of granite, three thousand five hundred feet in height. But with a dogged determination we tightened our belts and commenced. It took us four strenuous hours to conquer it, but when we finally reached the summit and gazed down on the lake it was well worth while. But there was now no desire to rhapsodize: we had an intense desire to *get there*, and, with the path leading downhill, we lost no time.

It was an extraordinary experience. Every minute brought us fifty or sixty feet nearer sea-level, and the difference in temperature was very noticeable. Soon we commenced to shed our coats and other garments, until at last we had nothing left but our trousers and shirts. Even these quickly became saturated with perspiration. It was exactly like entering a Turkish bath.

Half an hour from leaving the summit we found ourselves rounding a rocky bluff, from the edge of which we got our first glimpse of flat Langenberg. The town consists of about



H.M.S. Gwendolin on Lake Nyassa.

a hundred native huts and a large stone *boma* built on the tiny delta made by the river we had seen running through the gorge.

The remainder of the journey passed without incident, and finally our feet touched the sand of the delta. We had made our crossing, and, glancing up at the frowning mountain, we breathed a prayer of thankfulness that we had not booked return tickets. The Post Commandant, Captain Hill of the K.A.R., invited me to stay with him in his little grass bungalow.

After an early tea Captain Hill asked me to join him on a fishing trip. In a tiny steel boat we rowed out to the mouth of the river, and then he prepared his tackle, consisting of fifteen yards of three-quarter-inch Manila rope furnished with a large iron meat-hook and baited with the kidneys of an ox. Casting this overboard, we waited patiently for half an hour. Just as I was commencing to make the conventional remarks that one always does make on these occasions, the line suddenly tautened and the boat started to race forward as though towed by a whale.

"For goodness' sake cut the rope," I gasped. "It's a croc.!"

"Croc. be hanged!" coolly retorted the captain. "I doubt whether it's even a big fish!"

Big or little, the brute managed to tow us nearly half a mile, and then, as we slowed down, we began to haul. Our prize proved to be a catfish weighing eighty-seven pounds, and it was dusk before we safely grounded the boat on the beach near the bungalow and pulled the slimy monster on to dry land.

That night I dreamt I was hanging over my precipice once more, with a catfish gripping my leg and an elephant's trunk twisted round my neck pulling me back. I was glad to see the light of day and hear the welcome news that H.M.S. *Gwendolin* had arrived and that I could embark for Fort Johnston immediately. My troubles were temporarily over.

THE END.

The Trials of a Naturalist's Wife

By "M.B.B."

ILLUSTRATED BY L. R. BRIGHTWELL.

Some cynic once said that women have no sense of humour. This most amusing narrative conclusively proves the contrary, for without a sense of humour the Authoress would never have survived her manifold misadventures or been able to set them down so vivaciously. Evidently, to judge from this story, it is not entirely a bed of roses to be the wife of a scientist and accompany him to the wild places of the earth in search of specimens. All sorts of odd experiences are divertingly described by the writer, and we can promise our readers many a chuckle. In this instalment the Authoress describes a nerve-racking experience in New York.

V.



It was in America that I went through the most fearful trial to my nervous system that I have ever yet experienced.

We had booked berths by the *Umbria*, sailing at noon for England, and as we were staying with friends who lived some way from New York, it necessitated an early rise.

"The ten o'clock train will do you fine," our hostess had said; "the connection is good, so you will have no need to hustle."

"Which plainly shows that you do not know the little ways of the Naturalist," I replied. "Do you realize that in four different shops in New York there are now reposing two turtles, five gulls, six opossums, three mocking-birds, eleven kinds of duck, and about two dozen small birds? And do you further realize that all this caravan has to be collected and conveyed on board the *Umbria*?"

"My!" she ejaculated, pityingly. "It's just as well for you perhaps that there is an early train at 4.30!"

We compromised on one at nine, and 8.30 saw me driving off to the station with the boxes, the cameras, and "Tobs," the setter.

"Be careful of the cameras, Molly," said Dick. "I am going to walk, as Trevor knows of two nests he wants to show me, and I may be able to get another of those rare butterflies."

I arrived at the station, struggled with the "Express" system, and had an exciting chase after "Tobs," who got tired of watching me check baggage and wandered off into the woods.

Then we waited for the Naturalist.

At the very last moment, just as the train came in sight, he appeared, hot, dishevelled, and with coat torn; but he was triumphantly happy, for he had got his butterfly, and the nests were some he had never seen before.

The train steamed in.

"Jump on, Molly," he shouted, "and take the cameras and 'Tobs.' I'll get the tickets and look after the luggage."

"I've checked it! It's all right!" I cried, as I dragged the struggling dog towards the train.

But nothing on earth would persuade that creature to get in and leave his master behind. He sat down firmly and howled! I pulled, I commanded, and I fear I even kicked, but with no effect whatever. One frail female has absolutely no chance against a full-sized and determined Irish setter!

"Pull him up, missie!" called the black conductor.

"Then lend a hand yourself!" I retorted.

He advanced warily. "Tobs" growled. He hastily retreated.

I tried coaxing.

"Come, 'Tobsy, boy'!" I cooed. "Come along!"

"Tobsy boy" gave a spring and dashed headlong down the platform. He had spotted Dick in the distance, and had no further use for me!

The train began to move. I skipped on board and trusted that the Naturalist had done likewise. For once my trust was justified, and, the train being a corridor one, he soon joined me, "Tobs" following him contentedly.

"You've got the cameras?" he queried. "Where are the checks for the luggage?"

"Here are the cameras and here are the checks!" I replied, rather triumphantly. I felt that I had done well to manage the luggage off my own bat as it were.

"Good," said my lord and master; "and where is the little black bag?"

"The what?" I asked.

"The little black bag with the steamer tickets in it?"

"The little black bag?"

"Yes! Where is it? Quick! It has our tickets, and my cheque-book, and all my loose money—about £50! Where is it?"

"I—I saw it at the station!" I gasped feebly; "it was on the seat when I tied 'Tobs' to the leg!"

"Good heavens, Molly! You've not forgotten it? Why, we're stranded! My cheque-book even—and our tickets! Are you *sure* you have not got it?"

"Quite," I returned miserably. "You said that you would look after the bags! I only thought of 'Tobs'!"

"What on earth are we to do!"

We rang for the conductor, and poured our story into his sympathetic ears.

"You've got to go back!" was his verdict.

"I can't!" said Dick. "We should never catch the boat, and I *must* collect the animals."

"Then the missis must go back!" said the conductor. "If she gets off at the next stop there's a train back in half an hour. It don't stop as a general rule, but the gentleman at the depot will signal it if she tells him how she is fixed. Then there is another train to New York will get her there by eleven-twenty; that's lots of time to cross New York and catch the boat at twelve."

Dick looked at me doubtfully. I faced him bravely.

"I'll do it, Dick!" I declared.

He looked desperate.

"It seems the only way, darling! But I hate

to let you do it. Do you think you can manage?"

"Of course I can!" I replied, stoutly.

"But——" he began, but here the train slowed, and we were at the next stop!

I got off and waved smilingly as the train steamed out again, and I was left to my task. I felt very lone and helpless.

The passengers cleared off, and I went in search of the "gentleman of the depot," to tell him how I was "fixed."

He was young, good-looking, and sympathetic.

"Wal! I never did!" he cried. "If it ain't too bad! Why, of course I'll stop the train, and I guess we'll 'phone right through to Barberry—you say it was Barberry?—and see if the 'grip' is still lying round!"

The possibility of the bag having been stolen had not even struck me before! What if it were gone, and I was left penniless here, unable to buy even the ticket to New York, unable to get on or go back! What *should* I do? And what *would* Dick do if the boat sailed and I had not arrived!

The tense state of my feelings until that young man "got on" to Barberry, and heard the joyful news that the bag was still there, can be better imagined than described!

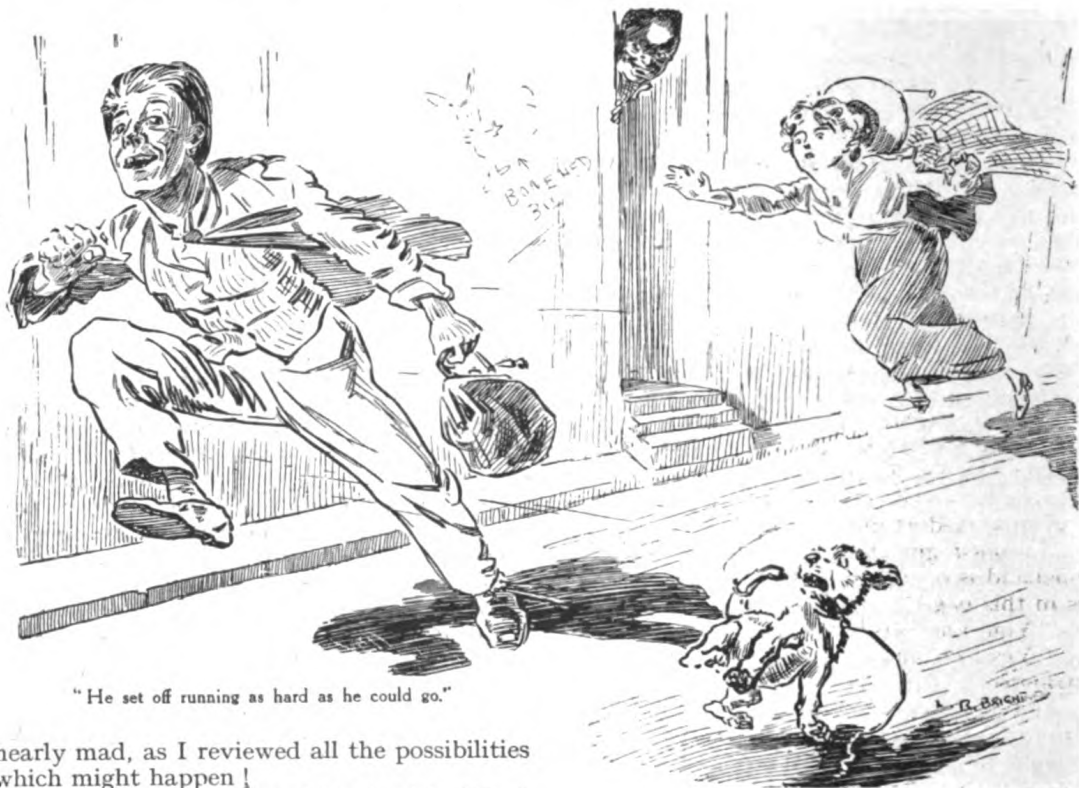
In about half an hour the train arrived, duly stopped (to the wonderment of the

passengers) and eventually set me down again at Barberry, where I clasped the precious bag to my thankful heart.

It was now ten, and the next train did not go for half an hour. Never did half an hour pass so slowly! I sat in the waiting-room and went



"We poured our story into his sympathetic ears."



nearly mad, as I reviewed all the possibilities which might happen!

Supposing that I missed the boat! What was her name? The *Lucania*? Or the *Umbria*? Panic for five minutes; final decision for *Umbria*!

What wharf? More panics!

How was I to get to the wharf from the station? I had another panic, while horrid stories of the cost of American cabs chased through my brain.

All this was very exhausting and upsetting, so to distract my thoughts I went for a little walk in the woods opposite, still clinging firmly to the wretched black bag.

I walked for about ten minutes, and then sat down to rest. I was watching the butterflies, and day-dreaming, when suddenly I heard the far-away whistle of an approaching train! With horror I realized that I must have miscalculated the time! Gathering up my skirts, I tore back along the twisty pathway, jumped the stile (leaving fragments of my best white petticoat on stray nails), tore across the road, and dashed into the station just in time to see—a slow luggage train steam lazily through!

I sat down and thought violently.

In due time my longed-for train came in. I got on board—this time *with* the black bag—and counted the minutes until we reached New York. Fortunately there was no delay at the ferry, and it was not much past eleven when I arrived at the other side.

Here the disconcerting custom of "no porters" paralyzed me once more. There

was no one to consult, to get a cab, or to assist me in any way. I boldly attacked the very superior young man in the booking office, and to my relief he smiled upon me kindly.

"The *Umbria*? Yes, you can just make her if you look slick! You take the horse-car to 23rd Street and transfer to the downtown electric to 146th Street; then you walk two blocks and get the subway—"

"But I can't!" I wailed. "What do you mean by horse-car? And how do I transfer?"

"Gosh!" said he, solemnly. "You're a tenderfoot? You won't do it! Jim!"

A tall youth appeared, spat a quid of tobacco with great precision into a spittoon fully ten yards from him, and replied "Yep?"

"This young lady's hustlin' after the *Umbria*, sailin' noon, and she ain't acquainted with Noo York City!"

Jim looked at me critically.

"There's kebs?" he remarked.

"Where?" I asked, quickly.

He spat again.

"There's a livery stable up the street."

"But that will take hours!" I cried, in dismay. "It will take ages to put a horse in a cab, and I shall miss my boat."

"Jim" turned to the ticket collector, and remarked simply, "'Phone!"

He then lounged against the door and regarded me curiously.

"From England?" he queried.

"Yes," I replied, "but do you think I shall get to the boat in time? I——"

"My ma comes from there," Jim went on calmly. "What part do you come from?"

"I know I shall miss it!" I almost sobbed.

"How *can* I get there in time?"

Here the ticket collector returned.

"Ain't got a bloomin' 'orse left in the stables!" he announced. "You'd better cut for the tram, miss! You ask the conductor; he'll tell you when to transfer!"

"What is a transfer? Where do I go? Oh, it's absurd! I can't do it!" I ejaculated, while horrid visions of the poor Naturalist stranded without a ha'penny floated through my brain. "Oh! I must catch it! Here, Jim! I'll give you five dollars if you will come with me! Get me to the boat in time and you shall have five dollars!"

Jim looked at me.

"I *must* get there!" I went on. "My husband is on board and every cent we have is in this bag!"

"You don't say!"

"Yes I *do*, and if I can't get it to him he is stranded!"

Jim looked at the clock, spat on his hands, hitched up his trousers, and started for the door. I followed closely. As we stepped outside he suddenly seized the bag and set off running up the street as hard as he could go. Then terror and hot rage lent me wings. I tore up that street after Jim as I have never run before or since.

"Stop!" I howled between gasps for breath. "Stop! Stop! Stop, thief!"

Jim turned his head, wheeled round, seized my hands, and literally dragged me along for another dozen yards. Then he halted.

"Now you've done it!" he ejaculated, in wrath. "If you'd sprinted we'd ha' got that tram! But callin' out that darn foolishness I 'ad to stop! D'you think I want your bloomin' grip?" And he held out the despised black bag in scorn.

I clung to him panting and sobbing.

"I'm sorry!" I gasped.

"Sorry!" he replied, witheringly. "Well, you've lost your boat!"

I wept.

He regarded me stonily; then looked over my head and spat into the road beyond. Suddenly he pushed the bag into my arms, tore himself loose, and commenced to dance a hornpipe in the middle of the street. A very superior-looking private brougham and pair coming down at a smart pace had as much as it could do to pull out of his way.

"Where are you goin', William?" he shouted to the irate driver.

"Over you if you don't stop foolin'!" was the furious answer.

"Are you goin' home?"

"Yep!"

"Then do me a turn and take me an' my girl down to the *Umbria*! She's sailin' noon, an' we can't make it!"

There was a little excited conversation; then Jim returned, all smiles.

"He'll do it! Jump in!"

"But whose carriage is it?" I asked, as we whirled away.

"Mr. R. T. Morgan-Homer's! 'Tis the smartest team in Noo York City! He'll get you there on time! Now 'ave you got your blessed grip?"

I had, and clung to it closely as we tore through New York City! We dashed down side-streets, over half-made roads, through crowded thoroughfares, and under the noses of cable-cars! Policemen shouted, foot-passengers glared, and other drivers used language far from refined, but we tore on regardless. Jim chuckled at each shave, and I gripped the floor with my toes. We passed a clock pointing at five minutes to twelve, but still I had hopes. Then came a block, and we had to wait what seemed an eternity.

"I don't see my five dollars!" said Jim. "Pity we didn't 'phone the *Umbria* to wait!"

"You've earned the five dollars, even if we don't catch the boat," I said. "Here you are, and I will give the same to William if we get there!"

Jim leaned out of the window and conversed forcibly with the policeman holding up the traffic, and also with William. Consequently, the moment we could get through we *tore*. The next clock said twelve-ten, and I gave up hope. Not so William! He kept up the pace until we reached the wharfs; then he lashed the horses into a gallop round the corner. As we turned he fairly howled with delight. The *Umbria* was still there! We thundered down the wooden wharf, men flying to right and left of us. The gangway was just going up, but willing hands tore the door open, and out I leaped!

"Hold the gangway!" voices shouted.

"Tickets?" someone demanded.

"On board!" I gasped.

"Up you go! Quick!"

I could have hugged both Jim and "William," but contented myself with filling their hands with dollar bills. Then, *with* the black bag, I sped up the planks, dashed on board, and sank panting into my Beloved's arms, amid the cheers of the onlookers.

Two minutes later the gangway was drawn up, and the *Umbria* sailed!

I hereby take this opportunity of proffering my sincere apologies and thanks to Mr. R. T. Morgan-Homer, of New York City.



V.



DESSA was in the hands of the Central Powers, who on the

application of their vassals, the Ukrainian Government, had invaded Southern Russia ostensibly to suppress Bolshevism, but really to obtain supplies.

As we left the ship, in a small boat, in the company of the third mate and third engineer, I noticed that the piers were picketed by Austrian soldiers, so we rowed around till we came to a landing-place where a number of people were disembarking from a coastal steamer. Walking through the docks, unmolested by any of the soldiery, we hired a droshky and drove to the house of the Russian whose address we had obtained from X—— in Constantinople.

We were fortunate in our call, for we found that K—— had been visited by two friends who had just come from Petrograd. They had been arrested by Bolsheviks in Moscow, and—though they had no sympathy with the rule of the proletariat—they declared themselves devout adherents to the cause of anarchy. Aided by false passports of humble pretensions, they had managed eventually to leave Moscow and reach Odessa,

My TWO YEARS' CAPTIVITY • AMONG • the TURKS

*An Airman's Adventures
and Daring Escape* — by
CAPT. T.W. WHITE, D.F.C.

ILLUSTRATED BY ERNEST PRATER

This narrative—specially written for "The Wide World Magazine"—describes the thrilling experiences of an Australian flying officer who was captured by the Turks while endeavouring to cut some telegraph wires outside Bagdad. Enduring all kinds of hardships, Captain White was taken from prison-camp to prison-camp, always on the look-out for a chance to escape, for he consistently refused to give his parole. Not for two weary years, however, did his opportunity come, and then he got away in a very clever and daring fashion. A series of night-mare adventures followed—narrow shaves of recapture, of death at the hands of Bolsheviks, and nerve-trying spells spent in hiding and disguise—until at long last he reached Salonica and safety. No more remarkable story of personal adventure has emerged from the records of the war.

where they considered that their own passports would suffice.

They accordingly gave us the two false passports, which we later found very useful in obtaining bread, tea, and sugar at a cheap rate as Russian subjects, from the Austrians of the Army of Occupation.

My passport declared me to be one Serge Fedorovitch Davidoff, a native of Turkestan, of the Orthodox faith, and possessed of a wife aged nineteen, named Anastasia, while Bott's declared him to be a German-speaking Lett named Genkoff.

A few days afterwards, when visiting the Museum, I tried my handwriting in the visitors' book, and found that I was beginning to write the name tolerably like the original.

Space does not permit recording much of our experiences in Russia. But as we could only make plans to reach Odessa at the outset, we had now to commence new plans for leaving Russia, which was no easy matter.

From several sources we were told that the way to Archangel was impossible owing to the chaotic Bolshevik state of Central Russia. We then decided to travel east to Baku on the Caspian Sea, but word reached us that it had recently been taken by the Turks.

Roumania was possible, but we could not see a way out of that country.

Meanwhile we had to keep our eyes open.

Fiendish atrocities had been perpetrated by the Bolsheviks in Odessa in March, 1918, when there had been a wholesale killing of officers and the bourgeoisie. Among other horrors, a number of naval officers, bound to planks, had been burned alive in the furnaces of the *Almaz*, one of the ships of the fleet; others, including many rich citizens, were thrown into the sea. Owing to this, Austrian patrols marched the streets, and Ukrainski police stood at every street corner with orders to shoot any person found with arms.

The housing problem in Odessa being at that time as difficult as it seems to be in London at present, we had trouble in finding a place at which to stay. Owing, however, to the kind offices of H——, an English civilian interned by the Austrians, we were introduced to a poor Ukrainian officer

and the deep sea." We had to carry our revolvers, in case some of the twenty thousand odd lurking Bolsheviks in the city took a fancy to rob or shoot us; and on the other hand we were in danger from German, Austrian, and Ukrainski police, who might shoot us on sight or at least make us prisoners again for possessing arms.

But we were only stopped once, and then at night, when, by complacently purchasing some stolen cigarettes from the evil-looking Hungarian who challenged us, we went unsuspected and were allowed to proceed.

There was frequent shooting between lurking Bolsheviks and Austrians at night; and much robbery with violence, and on one occasion the amiable Bolsheviks blew up a mighty Austrian ammunition dump, causing incredible havoc for miles around.

From his seclusion, the representative of Lenin and Trotsky in Odessa exhorted the Bolsheviks in the town to recommence the



"We were only stopped once."

who lived in daily expectation of assassination by Bolsheviks. Glad to have two people in his house who possessed revolvers, he allowed us to sleep in the clean though tiny room which he occupied in a poor quarter of the city that was principally Bolshevik.

Consequently we were "between the devil

killing of officers and the middle class, as there was a rumour that the twelve thousand odd Germans and twenty thousand Austrians that garrisoned the town were shortly to leave. The frame of mind of those unarmed citizens whose intellectual endowments, education, or alleged financial status caused them



The Author as he appeared at this time.

to be classed as neither political reactionaries, demagogues, nor members of the criminal or submerged tenth classes, and therefore bourgeoisie, who should be robbed or shot on sight, can best be imagined, and is an experience that intending disciples of the Bolshevik cause in more civilized countries would do well to try first before making up their minds.

The massacre was postponed for three days, during which time wholesale arrests by the Austrians averted the holocaust till after we had escaped from the town.

As we were known to several of the surviving Ukrainian officers, we had an invitation, as sanctuary, to a small fort on the outskirts of the town, where a few officers hoped to make a last stand; and also to a tiny gunboat, where some of the sailors were not Bolshevik.

By the cable news which has come to hand since the Armistice, it would appear that after we left the officers who invited us tried to hold the fort, for the Franco-Greek troops who attempted to hold Odessa later reported that there were a number of bodies of Ukrainian officers awaiting identification.

H—, who was in partnership with a German and a Jew, ran a small tannery, where I worked for awhile among strange companions in the shape of destitute army officers and repentant Bolsheviks. Meanwhile Bott was recovering from a severe attack of jaundice, which was evidently the aftermath of our experience in the steamer's tanks.

At other times, so as to earn some food, I used to saw wood for H—'s

Russian wife—a job I did not relish, as I had got very weak and thin on the ship. I also used to mind the baby!

Having run out of money and having always found the obtaining of sufficient food a great difficulty—pasties eaten at street corners are not very sustaining—on the advice of W—, an Englishman we met, we called on the Dutch Consul, who very kindly lent us two thousand roubles each.

Meanwhile we had arranged to join General Denikin's anti-Bolshevik army by arrangement with V—, the Ukrainian aviator, who had helped us in Constantinople before our escape, and who later had also got away as a stowaway on another ship.

Being in possession of so much money, and not having had a good meal for months, we decided to buy a real good dinner each, and go to the Opera afterwards.

In company with a Russian and a hilarious and irrepressible Irishman, who had been in the cable service and had been interned by the Austrians, we bought a very ordinary dinner that cost us a hundred and fifteen roubles each, which at the pre-war value of the rouble would amount to over £11.

This may give the reader some idea of what profiteering Bolshevism, and a foreign occupation, had done to food prices in Russia.

That evening we received a message to catch the train for Katerinadar, to join the anti-Bolshevik army. Being loth, however, to miss a Russian rendering of Bovis Goudenoff for which we had already paid, we decided to catch the next train, and appreciate the inimitable Russian music to the full.

But it transpired that there was not another train for a week, and during this time we



A street in Odessa wrecked by the explosion of an ammunition dump set on fire by the Bolsheviks.

heard of the Bulgarian collapse and their request for an armistice.

We therefore decided to go to Bulgaria instead, and with the assistance of D—, a Russian merchant service skipper, and the Irishman, we got aboard the *Euphrat*, a Russian ship sent by the Austrians to Varna to bring back released Ukrainian prisoners.

Hiding about the docks by night, and feeling very miserable, as we were both suffering from Spanish influenza and, of course, could get no medical attention, we walked past the Austrian sentry on the gangway with a number of Bulgarian peasants who were going on board. D— spoke to the captain, an old friend, on our behalf, and next morning we saw Odessa of the fine streets—which twice since then has been in the throes of Bolshevism—fade away over the stern. Two days afterwards, during which time we kept well away from a number of Bulgarian officers who were on board, we arrived at Varna, the principal Bulgarian port on the Black Sea coast, being escorted through the mine-fields by a Bulgarian torpedo-boat.

To our disgust, the ship was put in quarantine by the Bulgarians for five days. We avoided being taken off with the peasants to an unpleasant-looking quarantine barracks by hiding among the boats on the boat-deck, where we found three other persons in the shape of a Russian general and two naval captains, also travelling incognito.

Together, by arrangement with the captain, we got off the ship in a small boat and, falling in with a French naval officer, who had arrived about two days before, we went to the French headquarters, where we two were given a guide and taken to the British headquarters.

On the way we saw two mounted "Tommies" trotting proudly along the street, and we had to stop and watch them—the first free soldiers of our own side that we had seen for so long—until they were out of sight.

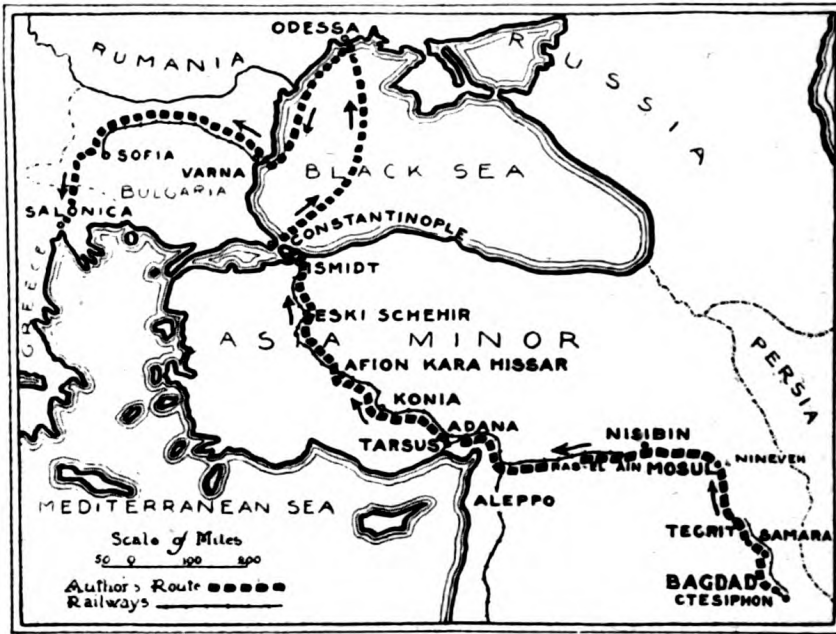


"A jubilant British batman slapped me heartily on the back."

At the Hotel London we met Brigadier-General Ross and ten officers, who, with fifty men of the Durham Light Infantry, had arrived only a few days before.

We resembled tramps more than anything else. I was wearing a coat, much too big for me, given me by B—, an Englishman I met in Odessa. I had replaced my fez with an old felt hat I had bought. A cream waistcoat adorned with green checks, also a gift, I wore for warmth alone; and I carried my revolver and ammunition, my spare collar and tie, bits of string, and so on, in the skirt of my frowsy Chesterfield.

Congenial company, good food, and a bath made us almost forget our influenza, and after handing in our reports on the number of Germans and Austrians in Odessa, numbers of guns, depots, stores, etc., as far as we had been able to ascertain by questioning and eavesdropping in the *cafés*, we were sent, in company with two Italian officers who had



This map shows the Author's wanderings from the time of his capture, near Bagdad, until he reached safety at Salonica.

escaped from Vienna, on a two days' train journey to Sofia *via* Plevna.

A car placed at our disposal there speeded us through the scene of the *dibâcle* of the Bulgarian retreat in the Kreshna and Rupel Passes; then past battered villages to the lines held for so long by the British troops in the Struma Valley. Next, climbing away from the river, we wound over a white ribbon of smooth road that overlooked neat

case I hadn't heard the *poilus* singing and firing, and the guns and sirens of the warships in the harbour: "La guerre est finie, Johnnie!"

And then I wished that our adventure had occurred a year sooner.

And at Bertha's Bar, the one and only place in cosmopolitan Salonica where such a thing as an armistice could be celebrated in the manner approved by soldiers, we tried to cure our influenza and forget the war.

THE END.

A CURIOUS JAPANESE CUSTOM.

THE photograph reproduced on this page shows the quaint Japanese custom of offering a fervent prayer by means of ablution. "When a Japanese lady finds her husband seriously ill," writes a Japanese correspondent, "she offers up a prayer to her favourite deity for her husband's recovery. This commonly occurs when the patient has been given up by the doctor. The faithful wife, usually dressed in white, goes first to a chosen spot, where she purifies the atmosphere by flourishing a sacred paper—seen in the picture—just as a Shinto priest does. Then she proceeds to empty buckets of water over her body, uttering words of prayer all the time. By this means she believes she can attract the attention of the god, so that he will save her husband's life." This kind of intercession, one would imagine, calls for distinct fortitude during the winter time!



A wife praying for the recovery of a sick husband by pouring buckets of water over herself.

An Editor's Experiences.

By A. L. McMILLAN,

Of the "Macksville Enterprise," Macksville, Kansas.

ILLUSTRATED BY W. G. WHITTAKER.

Interesting reminiscences of an American Editor. Some people think that "nothing ever happens in the old home town," but these little stories show that mystery and romance find their way even into the life of a working journalist in a small country community.



THE first little incident I am about to relate happened during my first year as editor and manager of the newspaper on which I learned my business—the *Sterling* (Kansas) *Gazette*. All through my business and official career I have prided myself upon my ability to "see the joker" in any proposition that was put up to me that might put me in a hole. My bump of caution is well developed, and, even as a young man, the fellow who tried to "put one over" on me was usually wasting his time. But I "fell" for this one job, and shall never be able to explain why I did.

Printing-house honour and the ethics of the trade and profession are as strict as those of the banking business, the medical profession, or the law. We are supposed to keep faith with our patrons, and to keep secret anything that should not be made public, and we come as near doing it as is possible. When I was approached upon the matter that furnishes the foundation for this story, the "approacher" had me fouled the first throw. He was a smooth-tongued scamp, and deciding on his proposition at first glance I promised to do the job. Here is the story:—

One evening in the early fall of 1883 I was alone in the office doing a little writing, the other members of the staff having left work for the day. Presently a boy, whom I knew very well as the porter at the principal hotel, came in and asked for the foreman of the office. He held in his hand a note, and, coming forward, placed it in my hand. It simply asked the foreman to call at the hotel and see the person whose signature was attached. I had actually held the post not very long before, and as the man who was then acting as foreman lived some distance away, I decided to represent him. I found the stranger in the parlour of the hotel, in his shirt sleeves, striding nervously about the room. He talked like a Frenchman, but looked more like an Italian. I soon learned that he was a man of brilliant ideas, full of energy, and without doubt one who did big things in his own line, whatever that was. I allowed him to believe that I was the foreman for whom he had sent, and very

mysteriously and cautiously he unfolded his proposition. He was excitable at times, and evidently in some kind of trouble. After a good deal of preliminary talk he told me that he wanted me to set in type an article that he would dictate, and print him a dozen copies of it.

The thing looked all right, and I said I'd do it. We were in business to do printing, and I saw no harm in it. I agreed to meet him at the office after supper.

The stranger was waiting for me at my office about 7.30, and we closed ourselves in for the job in hand. His manner gave me the cue that he wanted secrecy, so I locked the door. He didn't tell me his troubles, but when he unfolded his scheme I knew well enough he had 'em. He wanted me to write as he dictated, and as he talked rather fast and appeared restless, I had to push the pencil over the paper at a rapid rate.

Time has wiped from my memory a good many of the particulars of that article, but it concerned the drowning on the Californian coast of a prominent man of affairs, whose activities in life had been mixed up in a good many shady matters from Brazil to Alaska. The man who was dictating the story knew the "victim's" history perfectly; there was no doubt of that. But now he was dead; the newspaper clipping we were preparing would make that perfectly clear.

About the middle of the recital, as the stranger went on dictating, I commenced to get "cold feet," and raised objections. He pleaded with me so strongly to go ahead, however, that he satisfied my scruples, and I finished the writing. Then, with nimble fingers, I made the types jump into the "stick," and in forty minutes it was ready for the press. Among the stock in hand was some old "ready-print." It wouldn't do, of course, to have the reverse side of the supposed "clipping" blank, so this stock, with printing already on one side, was used, and I ran him off a dozen copies or more. Afterwards he stayed with me until the type was distributed—more, I think, to make my better acquaintance than for any other reason.

As we stood close together, and I was about to blow out the light standing on the table, he slipped a ten-dollar bill under my hand. I offered

to get him his change, but he waved it aside. Then, after a quick handshake, he moved toward the stairs, and passed out of my sight for good. The next day I strolled down to the hotel, hoping that I might see him there, but he had gone. I looked over the hotel register, thinking perhaps I might see the name of the man who was "drowned," but it did not appear there.

For several weeks afterwards the thing worried me badly. Had I been guilty of aiding a "crook" who was taking this method of throwing the officers of the law off his trail? What if he were captured and those slips found in his possession? Would the authorities trace them to our office? When I thought of these things I got really scared.

As the weeks passed and nothing happened, however, the load on my mind lightened, and I gradually shook off my anxiety. It was a good lesson to me, and I have profited by it since on a number of occasions.

Many times have I wondered what became of the mysterious stranger, and what the explanation of his action really was. There may have been a real romance behind it, or it may have been some very sordid story. However, I have no grudge against him. He helped me along with my business education, and to-day the man with a smooth tongue, peddling a shady proposition, "cuts no ice" with me. I can smell him half a mile away.

If my memory serves me right, it was in June, 1887, that there came into the office of the *Sterling Gazette* a lanky, red-headed, hickory-faced man, about thirty-five years of age, who asked to look over the files of the paper. I was editor and manager of the paper at the time, and attended to his wants.

After finding what he was looking for he brought a chair over to where I was sitting, and began in a low, even voice, to tell me his story. He had just arrived in Sterling, it appeared, on an important mission. I became very interested, and soon we were both leaning over the files reading about the matter he was concerned with. This had appeared in the *Gazette* of September 21st, 1876. I will now go back to that date and narrate what happened.

Down in the Paladoca country, in the "Pan-handle" of Texas, A. C. Myers and Frank West owned a large cattle ranch. They had in their employ two men of the typical cowboy kind—intelligent, skilful with the rope and branding iron, and hard riders. They were valuable men for the reason that they did most of the "rustling" and selling. There came a time when these two young men—Eli T. Patten and Archibald Douglas—took the notion that they were not getting their proper share of the profits. In the absence of their chiefs they took a bunch of horses and cattle to Wichita and sold part of them, driving the others across the country to Great Bend, where they disposed of them. The

ranch-owners promptly got on their trail, and they were finally arrested in Wichita. Their trial was to take place there, but for some reason was transferred to Great Bend. In spite of the fact that the prisoners fought against it, Myers and West were deputized to escort them to Great Bend. They chose to take them overland in a wagon. As they approached the river about six miles south-west of Sterling, they drove a half-mile from the road and camped. The prisoners were shackled and handcuffed. A short time before daylight, as they were sleeping in the wagon, they were both shot in the back of the head. They were then thrown out of the wagon, their shackles and handcuffs removed, and they were even stripped of their clothing. One of the victims showed signs of life, and was shot a second time. They were then dragged off in different directions into the wild plum bushes and there left. The man who had committed the crime then hitched up, and drove south, and somewhere down in Barber County they filed an affidavit with a justice of the peace that their prisoners had made their escape.

Their work, however, had not been well done. The man they shot at twice must have had a skull like flint, for neither bullet entered his head. Both balls glanced off and lodged just under the skin. This man was Eli T. Patten, and soon after daylight he recovered consciousness and was able to make his way down to the river. Crossing over on the sand-bars, he went to the home of a farmer living near. He was taken to Sterling, and after he had told his story a posse was made up to go out and look for the other man, Douglas. They found him dead, and everything indicated that Patten had told a straight story. In a day or so an officer came down and took Patten up to Great Bend for trial. He was convicted of the crime of horse-stealing and sent to the penitentiary for four years. Strange as it may seem, neither Myers nor West appeared at the trial. They soon learnt that one of their supposed victims was very much alive, and in a short time sold out their ranch and moved to another part of Texas. After three years in prison Patten was pardoned, and returned to his home in Miami County. He was determined, however, to hunt down the man who had tried to take his life, and soon started on a search that lasted for about eight years. It seems that Myers and West knew the determined character of their pursuer pretty well, and, becoming uneasy, sold out for the second time. Their destination on this occasion was quite unknown, but Patten kept up the search just the same. He finally located them at Durango, Colorado, about two weeks before he found his way into the *Gazette* office that hot day in June, 1887.

As I have said, I became very much interested in his quest, and after getting his promise that I should have "exclusive rights" to the news feature in connection with it, I went with him to



"One of the victims was shot a second time."

the county seat to see the county attorney. Everything went along smoothly. A requisition on the governor of Colorado was procured, and with this the sheriff started for Colorado to arrest the men. The sheriff, Sheldon Stoddard, was a particular friend of mine, and I made arrangements with him to have the news of their arrest by wire. The message duly came on Wednesday morning. For Thursday's paper we had a full account of the affair, reprinting the old story of the murder for the purpose of refreshing people's memories, and it was a startling piece of news. Patten had kept faith with me, and the two newspapers across the street knew nothing of the matter until they saw it in the *Gazette*. One of them, going to press a little late, threw out a big lot of stuff they had in type and borrowed our story, type and all.

Then came the trials in the case. The men procured bond, and having plenty of means, employed the best legal talent available. When the time for the trial arrived, some excuse was offered and a plea made for putting it off until the next term. This was granted. The same thing happened two or three times. Patten was a poor man, and in the meantime had got married. He had sickness in his family, and the trips halfway across the State at his own expense became a burden to him. When the case was set for the last

time he failed to make his appearance. As he was the main witness—in fact, the only one who could give convicting testimony—the case could not be carried on, and the men were discharged.

I had fully believed that he would stick to the end, as he had often told me he would do everything in his power to put the men behind prison bars and I could not understand him backing out. I had my suspicions about the matter, and a few years later they were confirmed. When in Burlington, Kansas, about 1897, I met a man at the hotel there who knew Patten well. This man told me that Patten's wife was an only daughter, and, her mother being dead, the couple lived with her father. From the house where they lived to a spring where they got their water supply was quite a distance. One day, a short time before the last trial was to be held at Lyons, Patten came back from the spring carrying something more valuable than water. He had been met down there by a stranger, who, my informant said, convinced him that it would be to his advantage not to appear at the trial. As to this part of it, I have only the word of a stranger, but I believe it to be correct. The officers and the Court, in the absence of the principal witness, did everything in their power to convict the men charged with the crime, but all in vain, and they were finally discharged.

ODDS AND ENDS.

An Unofficial Mascot—The "Misericordia"—The "White Horse" of Dorsetshire.



REPRODUCED on this page is a picture of a young black buck which strayed into the camp of one of our cavalry regiments in India, and was adopted as a sort of unofficial pet. "The animal," writes a correspondent, "wandered into our lines, having smelt the grain on which our horses were feeding. These buck—or heron, as they are commonly known in India—grow to the size of an English deer, and have straight horns. The stable guard found the animal lying down near one of the horses, and upon examination discovered that it had been badly kicked. It soon recovered, however, and became quite a pet with the men. It has a playful way of walking up quietly behind one and making an attack from the rear. The odd thing about this buck was that it must have



This black buck attached itself to a cavalry regiment in India, and became an unofficial mascot.

way possible. Rich and poor men alike belong to this admirable society, and the curious costumes are worn in order to conceal their identity.



Members of the "Misericordia" at a funeral in Naples.

The photograph next reproduced shows the famous "White Horse" of Dorsetshire, to be seen near Weymouth. It was constructed by an escaped convict in the reign of George III., and shows the King on a magnificent white horse, the whole being of heroic size. It is said that the convict was granted a pardon for this clever piece of work, and he certainly deserved it. During one particular visit to the district, the story runs, the King discovered to his disgust that he was shown riding away from Weymouth, and, taking it as a covert hint, never visited Weymouth again. Which shows once again that if you are looking for offence you can always find it.

travelled at least sixty miles from the herd to which it belonged, for these particular animals are seldom seen in this part of India."

The above photograph shows a funeral procession in the streets of Naples, attended by members of a curious organization known as the Misericordia. These people, who wear white robes and cowls like the familiars of Inquisition times, undertake to visit the poor and afflicted at any hour of the day or night and assist in any



The famous "White Horse" of Dorsetshire, constructed by an escaped convict.